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Mrs. Knollys and Other Stories : : : :

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Mrs. Knollys and Other Stories

By F. J. Stimson

Charles Scribner's Sons
New York 1897

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MRS. KNOLLYS

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MRS. KNOLLYS

THE great Pasterzen glacier rises in Western Austria, and flows into Carinthia, and is fourteen or seventeen miles long, as you measure it from its birth in the snow-field, or from where it begins to move from the higher snows and its active course is marked by the first wrinkle. It flows in a straight, steady sweep, a grand avenue, guarded by giant mountains, steep and wide; a prototype, huge and undesigned, of the giants' stairway in the Venice palace. No known force can block its path; it would need a cataclysm to reverse its progress. What falls upon it moves with it, what lies beneath it moves with it—down to the polished surface of the earth's frame, laid bare; no blade of grass grows so slowly as it moves, no meteor of the air is so irresistible. Its substant ice curls freely, moulds, and breaks itself like water—breaks in waves, plastic like honey,

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crested lightly with a frozen spray; it winds tenderly about the rocky shore, and the granite, disintegrated into crumbs, flows on with it. All this so silently that busy, officious little Man lived a score of thousand years before he noticed even that the glacier moved.

Now, however, men have learned to congregate upon its shores, and admire. Scientists stick staves in the ground (not too near, lest the earth should move with it), and appraise the majesty of its motion; ladies, politely mystified, give little screams of pleased surprise; young men, secretly exultant, pace the yard or two between the sticks, a distance that takes the frozen stream a year to compass, and look out upon it half contemptuously. Then they cross it—carefully, they have enough respect left for that—with their cunningly nailed shoes and a rope; an hour or two they dally with it, till at last, being hungry and cold, they walk to the inn for supper. At supper they tell stories of their prowess, pay money to the guides who have protected them, and fall asleep after tea with weariness. Meantime, the darkness falls outside; but the white presence of the glacier breaks the night, and strange shapes unseen

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of men dance in its ashen hollows. It is so old that the realms of death and life conflict; change is on the surface, but immortality broods in the deeper places. The moon rises and sets; the glacier moves silently, like a time-piece marking the centuries, grooving the record of its being on the world itself—a feature to be read and studied by far-off generations of some other world. The glacier has a light of its own, and gleams to stars above, and the Great Glockner Mountain flings his shadow of the planets in its face.

Mrs. Knollys was a young English bride, sunny-haired, hopeful-eyed, with lips that parted to make you love them—parted before they smiled, and all the soft regions of her face broke into attendant dimples. And then, lest you should think it meant for you, she looked quickly up to "Charles," as she would then call him, even to strangers, and Charles looked down to her. Charles was a short foot taller, with much the same hair and eyes, thick, flossy whiskers, broad shoulders, and a bass voice. This was in the days before political economy cut Hymen's wings. Charles, like Mary, had little money but great hopes; and he was clerk in a govern-

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ment office, with a friendly impression of everybody and much trust in himself. And old Harry Colquhoun, his chief, had given them six weeks to go to Switzerland and be happy in, all in celebration of Charles Knollys's majority and marriage to his young wife. So they had both forgotten heaven for the nonce, having a passable substitute; but the powers divine overlooked them pleasantly and forgave it. And even the phlegmatic driver of their *Einspanner* looked back from the corner of his eye at the *schöne Engländerin*, and compared her mentally with the far-famed beauty of the Königssee. So they rattled on in their curious conveyance, with the pole in the middle and the one horse out on one side, and still found more beauty in each other's eyes than in the world about them. Although Charles was only one and twenty, Mary Knollys was barely eighteen, and to her he seemed godlike, in his age as in all other things. Her life had been as simple as it had been short. She remembered being a little girl, and then the next thing that occurred was Charles Knollys, and positively the next thing she remembered of importance was being Mrs. Charles Knollys; so that old Mrs. Knol-

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lys, her guardian aunt and his, had first called her a love of a baby, and then but a baby in love. All this, of course, was five and forty years ago, for you know how old she was when she went again to Switzerland last summer—three and sixty.

They first saw the great mountains from the summit of the Schafberg. This is a little height, three cornered, between three lakes; a natural Belvedere for Central Europe. Mr. and Mrs. Knollys were seated on a couch of Alpine roses behind a rhododendron bush watching the sunset; but as Charles was desirous of kissing Mrs. Knollys, and the rhododendron bush was not thick enough, they were waiting for the sun to go down. He was very slow in doing this, and by way of consolation Knollys was keeping his wife's hand hidden in the folds of her dress. Undoubtedly a modern lady would have been talking of the scenery, giving word-color pictures of the view; but I am afraid Mrs. Knollys had been looking at her husband, and talking with him of the cottage they had bought in a Surrey village, not far from Box Hill, and thinking how the little carvings and embroideries would look there which they had bought abroad.

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And, indeed, Mrs. Charles secretly thought Box Hill an eminence far preferable to the Venediger, and Charles's face an infinitely more interesting sight than any lake, however expressive. But the sun, looking askance at them through the lower mist, was not jealous; all the same he spread his glory lavishly for them, and the bright little mirror of a lake twinkled cannily upward from below. Finally, it grew dark; then there was less talking. It was full night when they went in, she leaning on his arm and looking up; and the moonbeam on the snowy shoulder of the Glockner, twenty leagues away, came over straightway from the mountain to her face. Three days later, Charles Knollys, crossing with her the lower portion of the Pasterzen glacier, slipped into a crevasse, and vanished utterly from the earth.

II

ALL this you know. And I was also told more of the young girl, bride and widow at eighteen; how she sought to throw herself into the clear blue gulf; how she refused to

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leave Heiligenblut; how she would sit, tearless, by the rim of the crevasse, day after day, and gaze into its profundity. A guide or man was always with her at these times, for it was still feared that she would follow her young husband to the depths of that still sea. Her aunt went over from England to her; the summer waxed; autumn storms set in; but no power could win her from the place whence Charles had gone.

If there was a time worse for her than that first moment, it was when they told her that his body never could be found. They did not dare to tell her this for many days, but busied themselves with idle cranes and ladders, and made futile pretences with ropes. Some of the big, simple-hearted guides even descended into the chasm, absenting themselves for an hour or so, to give her an idea that something was being done. Poor Mrs. Knollys would have followed them had she been allowed, to wander through the purple galleries, calling Charles. It was well she could not; for all Kaspar could do was to lower himself a hundred yards or so, chisel out a niche, and stand in it, smoking his honest pipe to pass the time, and trying to

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fancy he could hear the murmur of the waters down below. Meantime Mrs. Knollys strained her eyes, peering downward from above, leaning on the rope about her waist, looking over the clear brink of the bergschrund.

It was the Herr Doctor Zimmermann who first told her the truth. Not that the good Doctor meant to do so. The Herr Doctor had had his attention turned to glaciers by some rounded stones in his garden by the Traunsee, and more particularly by the Herr Privatdocent Splüthner. Splüthner, like Uncle Toby, had his hobby-horse, his pet conjuring words, his gods *ex machinâ*, which he brought upon the field in scientific emergencies; and these gods, as with Thales, were Fire and Water. Craters and Flood were his accustomed scape-goats, upon whose heads were charged the unaccountable; and the Herr Doctor, who had only one element left to choose from, and that a passive one, but knew, on general principles, that Splüthner must be wrong, got as far ϕff as he could and took Ice. And Splüthner having poohpoohed this, Zimmermann rode his hypothesis with redoubled zeal. He became convinced that ice was the embodiment of orthodoxy.

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Fixing his professional spectacles on his substantial nose, he went into Carinthia and ascended the great Venice mountains, much as he would have performed any other scientific experiment. Then he encamped on the shores of the Pasterzen glacier, and proceeded to make a study of it.

So it happened that the Doctor, taking a morning stroll over the subject of his experiment, in search of small things which might verify his theory, met Mrs. Knollys sitting in her accustomed place. The Doctor had been much puzzled, that morning, on finding in a rock at the foot of the glacier the impression, or sign-manual as it were, of a certain Fish, whose acquaintance the Doctor had previously made only in tropical seas. This fact seeming, superficially, to chime in with Splüthnerian mistakes in a most heterodox way, the Doctor's mind had for a moment been diverted from the ice; and he was wondering what the fish had been going to do in that particular gallery, and secretly doubting whether it had known its own mind, and gone thither with the full knowledge and permission of its maternal relative. Indeed, the good Doctor would probably have ascribed

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its presence to the malicious and personal causation of the devil, but that the one point on which he and Splüthner were agreed was the ignoring of unscientific hypotheses. The Doctor's objections to the devil were none the less strenuous for being purely scientific.

Thus ruminating, the Doctor came to the crevasse where Mrs. Knollys was sitting, and to which a little path had now been worn from the inn. There was nothing of scientific interest about the fair young English girl, and the Doctor did not notice her; but he took from his waistcoat-pocket a leaden bullet, moulded by himself, and marked "Johannes Carpentarius, Juvavianus, A. U. C. 2590," and dropped it, with much satisfaction, into the crevasse. Mrs. Knollys gave a little cry; the bullet was heard for some seconds tinkling against the sides of the chasm; the tinkles grew quickly fainter, but they waited in vain for the noise of the final fall. "May the Splüthner live that he may learn by it," muttered the Doctor; "I can never recover it."

Then he remembered that the experiment had been attended with a sound unaccounted for by the conformity of the bullet to the laws of gravitation; and looking up, he saw

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Mrs. Knollys in front of him, no longer crying, but very pale. Zimmermann started, and in his confusion dropped his best brass registering thermometer, which also rattled down the abyss.

"You say," whispered Mrs. Knollys, "that it can never be recovered!"

"Madam," spoke the Doctor, doffing his hat, "how would you recofer from a blace when the smallest approximation which I haf yet been able to make puts the depth from the surface to the bed of the gletscher at vrom sixteen hundred to sixteen hundred and sixty *mètres* in distance?" Doctor Zimmermann spoke very good English; and he pushed his hat upon the back of his head, and assumed his professional attitude.

"But they all were trying——" Mrs. Knollys spoke faintly. "They said that they hoped he could be recovered." The stranger was the oldest gentleman she had seen, and Mrs. Knollys felt almost like confiding in him. "Oh, I must have the—the body." She closed in a sob; but the Herr Doctor caught at the last word, and this suggested to him only the language of scientific experiment.

"Recofer it? If, madam," Zimmermann

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went on with all the satisfaction attendant on the enunciation of a scientific truth, "we take a body and drop it in the schrund of this gletscher; and the ice-stream moves so slower at its base than on the upper part, and the ice will cover it; efen if we could reach the base, which is a mile in depth. Then, see you, it is all caused by the motion of the ice——"

But at this Mrs. Knollys had given a faint cry, and her guide rushed up angrily to the old professor, who stared helplessly forward. "God will help me, sir," said she to the Doctor, and she gave the guide her arm and walked wearily away.

The professor still stared, in amazement at her enthusiasm for scientific experiment and the passion with which she greeted his discoveries. Here was a person who utterly refused to be referred to the agency of Ice, or even, like Splüthner, of Fire and Water; and went out of the range of allowable hypotheses to call upon a Noumenon. Now both Splüthner and Zimmermann had studied all natural agencies and made allowance for them, but for the Divine they had always hitherto proved an alibi. The Doctor could make nothing of it.

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At the inn that evening he saw Mrs. Knollys with swollen eyes; and remembering the scene of the afternoon, he made inquiries about her of the innkeeper. The latter had heard the guide's account of the meeting; and as soon as Zimmermann had made plain what he had told her of the falling body, "Triple blockhead!" said he. "*Es war ihr Mann.*" The Herr Professor staggered back into his seat; and the kindly innkeeper ran upstairs to see what had happened to his poor young guest.

Mrs. Knollys had recovered from the first shock by this time, but the truth could no longer be withheld. The innkeeper could but nod his head sadly when she told him that to recover her Charles was hopeless. All the guides said the same thing. The poor girl's husband had vanished from the world as utterly as if his body had been burned to ashes and scattered in the pathway of the winds. Charles Knollys was gone, utterly gone; no more to be met with by his girl-wife, save as spirit to spirit, soul to soul, in ultramundane place. The fair-haired young Englishman lived but in her memory, as his soul, if still existent, lived in places indeterminate, un-

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knowable to Doctor Zimmermann and his compeers. Slowly Mrs. Knollys acquired the belief that she was never to see her Charles again. Then, at last, she resolved to go—to go home. Her strength now gave way; and when her aunt left, she had with her but the ghost of Mrs. Knollys—a broken figure, drooping in the carriage, veiled in black. The innkeeper and all the guides stood bareheaded, silent, about the door, as the carriage drove off, bearing the bereaved widow back to England.

III

When the Herr Doctor had heard the innkeeper's answer, he sat for some time with his hands planted on his knees, looking through his spectacles at the opposite wall. Then he lifted one hand and struck his brow impatiently. It was his way, when a chemical reaction had come out wrong.

"Du Dummkopf!" said he. "Triple blockhead, thou art so bad as Splüthner." No self-condemnation could have been worse to him than this. Thinking again of Mrs. Knollys, he gave one deep, gruff sob. Then

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he took his hat, and, going out, wandered by the shore of the glacier in the night, repeating to himself the Englishwoman's words: "*They said that they hoped he could be recovered.*" Zimmermann came to the tent where he kept his instruments, and stood there, looking at the sea of ice. He went to his measuring pegs, two rods of iron: one sunk deep and frozen in the glacier, the other drilled into a rock on the shore. "Triple blockhead!" said he again; "thou art worse than Splüthner. The Splüthner said the glacier did not move; thou, thou knowest that it does." He sighted from his rods to the mountain opposite. There was a slight and all but imperceptible change of direction from the day before.

He could not bear to see the English girl again, and all the next day was absent from the inn. For a month he stopped at Heiligenblut, and busied himself with his instruments. The guides of the place greeted him coldly every day, as they started on their glacier excursions or their chamois hunting. But none the less did Zimmermann return the following summer, and work upon his great essay in refutation of the Splüthner.

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Mrs. Knollys went back to the little cottage in Surrey, and lived there. The chests and cases she brought back lay unopened in the store-room: the little rooms of the cottage that was to be their home remained bare and unadorned, as Charles had seen them last. She could not bring herself to alter them now. What she had looked forward to do with him she had no strength to do alone. She rarely went out. There was no place where she could go to think of him. He was gone; gone from England, gone from the very surface of the earth. If he had only been buried in some quiet English churchyard, she thought—some green place lying open to the sun, where she could go and scatter flowers on his grave, where she could sit and look forward amid her tears to the time when she should lie side by side with him—they would then be separated for her short life alone. Now it seemed to her that they were far apart forever.

But late the next summer she had a letter from the place. It was from Dr. Zimmermann. There is no need here to trace the quaint German phrases, the formalism, the cold terms of science in which he made his

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meaning plain. It spoke of erosion; of the movement of the summer; of the action of the underwaters on the ice. And it told her, with tender sympathy oddly blended with the pride of scientific success, that he had given a year's most careful study to the place; with all his instruments of measurement he had tested the relentless glacier's flow; and it closed by assuring her that her husband might yet be found—in five and forty years. In five and forty years—the poor professor staked his scientific reputation on the fact—in five and forty years she might return, and the glacier would give up its dead.

This letter made Mrs. Knollys happier. It made her willing to live; it made her almost long to live until old age—that her Charles's body might be given back. She took heart to beautify her little home. The trifling articles she had bought with Charles were now brought out—the little curiosities and pictures he had given her on their wedding journey. She would ask how such and such a thing looked, turning her pretty head to some kind visitor, as she ranged them on the walls. Now and then she would have to lay the picture down, and cry a little, silently, as she

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remembered where Charles had told her it would look best. Still, she sought to furnish the rooms as they had planned them in their mind; she made her surroundings, as nearly as she could, as they had pictured them together. One room she never went into; it was the room Charles had meant to have for the nursery. She had no child.

But she changed, as we all change, with the passing of the years. I first remember her as a woman middle-aged, sweet-faced, hardly like a widow, nor yet like an old maid. She was rather like a young girl in love, with her lover absent on a long journey. She lived more with the memory of her husband; she clung to him more than if she had had a child. She never married—you would have guessed that; but, after the professor's letter, she never quite seemed to realize that her husband was dead. Was he not coming back to her?

Never in all my knowledge of dear English women have I known a woman so much loved. In how many houses was she always the most welcome guest! How often we boys would go to her for sympathy! I know she was the confidante of all our love affairs.

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I cannot speak for girls; but I fancy she was much the same with them. Many of us owed our life's happiness to her. She would chide us gently in our pettiness and folly, and teach us, by her very presence and example, what thing it was that alone could keep life sweet. How well we all remember the little Surrey cottage, the little home fireside where the husband had never been! I think she grew to imagine his presence, even the presence of children: boys, curly-headed, like Charles, and sweet, blue-eyed daughters; and the fact that it was all imagining seemed but to make the place more holy. Charles still lived to her as she had believed him in the month that they were married; he lived through life with her as her young love had fancied he would be. She never thought of evil that might have occurred—of failing affection, of cares. Her happiness was in her mind alone; so all the earthly part was absent.

There were but two events in her life—that which was past and that which was to come. She had lived through his loss; now she lived on for his recovery. But, as I have said, she changed, as all things mortal change;

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all but the earth and the ice-stream and the stars above it. She read much, and her mind grew deep and broad, none the less gentle with it all; she was wiser in the world; she knew the depths of human hope and sorrow. You remember her only as an old lady whom we loved. Only her heart did not change—I forgot that; her heart, and the memory of that last loving smile upon his face, as he bent down to look into her eyes, before he slipped and fell. She lived on, and waited for his body, as possibly his other self—who knows?—waited for hers. As she grew older she grew taller; her eyes were quieter, her hair a little straighter, darker than of yore; her face changed, only the expression remained the same. Mary Knollys!

Human lives rarely look more than a year, or five, ahead; Mary Knollys looked five and forty. Many of us wait, and grow weary in waiting, for those few years alone, and for some living friend. Mary Knollys waited five and forty years—for the dead. Still, after that first year, she never wore all black; only silvery grays, and white with a black ribbon or two. I have said that she almost seemed to think her husband living. She

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would fancy his doing this and that with her; how he would joy in this good fortune, or share her sorrows—which were few, mercifully. His memory seemed to be a living thing to her, to go through life with her, hand in hand. It changed as she grew old; it altered itself to suit her changing thought, until the very memory of her memory seemed to make it sure that he had really been alive with her, really shared her happiness or sorrow, in the far-off days of her earliest widowhood. It hardly seemed that he had been gone already then—she remembered him so well. She could not think that he had never been with her in their little cottage. And now, at sixty, I know she thought of him as an old person too; sitting by their fireside, late in life, mature, deep-souled, wise with the wisdom of years, going back with her, fondly, to recall the old, old happiness of their bridal journey, when they set off for the happy honeymoon abroad, and the long life now past stretched brightly out before them both. She never spoke of this, and you children never knew it; but it was always in her mind.

There was a plain stone in the little Surrey

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churchyard, now gray and moss-grown with the rains of forty years, on which you remember reading: "Charles Knollys—lost in Carinthia——" This was all she would have inscribed; he was but lost; no one *knew* that he was dead. Was he not yet to be found? There was no grassy mound beside it; the earth was smooth. Not even the date was there. But Mrs. Knollys never went to read it. She waited until he should come; until that last journey, repeating the travels of their wedding-days, when she should go to Germany to bring him home.

So the woman's life went on in England, and the glacier in the Alps moved on slowly; and the woman waited for it to be gone.

IV

In the summer of 1882, the little Carinthian village of Heiligenblut was haunted by two persons. One was a young German scientist, with long hair and spectacles; the other was a tall English lady slightly bent, with a face wherein the finger of time had deeply written tender things. Her hair was

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white as silver, and she wore a long, black veil. Their habits were strangely similar. Every morning, when the eastern light shone deepest into the ice-cavern at the base of the great Pasterzen glacier, these two would walk thither; then both would sit for an hour or two and peer into its depths. Neither knew why the other was there. The woman would go back for an hour in the late afternoon; the man, never. He knew that the morning light was necessary for his search.

The man was the famous young Zimmermann, son of his father, the old Doctor, long since dead. But the Herr Doctor had written a famous tract, when late in life, refuting all Splüthners, past, present, and to come; and had charged his son, in his dying moments, as a most sacred trust, that he should repair to the base of the Pasterzen glacier in the year 1882, where he would find a leaden bullet, graven with his father's name, and the date A. U. C. 2590.

All this would be vindication of his father's science. Splüthner, too, was a very old man, and Zimmermann the younger (for even he was no longer young) was fearful lest Splüthner should not live to witness his own refutation.

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The woman and the man never spoke to each other.

Alas, no one could have known Mrs. Knollys for the fair English girl who had been there in the young days of the century; not even the innkeeper, had he been there. But he, too, was long since dead. Mrs. Knollys was now bent and white-haired; she had forgotten, herself, how she had looked in those old days. Her life had been lived. She was now like a woman of another world; it seemed another world in which her fair hair had twined about her husband's fingers, and she and Charles had stood upon the evening mountain, and looked in one another's eyes. That was the world of her wedding-days, but it seemed more like a world she had left when born on earth. And now he was coming back to her in this. Meantime the great Pasterzen glacier had moved on, marking only the centuries; the men upon its borders had seen no change; the same great waves lifted their snowy heads upon its surface; the same crevasse still was where he had fallen. At night, the moonbeams, falling, still shivered off its glassy face; its pale presence filled the night, and immortality lay brooding in its hollows.

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Friends were with Mrs. Knollys, but she left them at the inn. One old guide remembered her, and asked to bear her company. He went with her in the morning, and sat a few yards from her, waiting. In the afternoon she went alone. He would not have credited you, had you told him that the glacier moved. He thought it but an Englishwoman's fancy, but he waited with her. Himself had never forgotten that old day. And Mrs. Knollys sat there silently, searching the clear depths of the ice, that she might find her husband.

One night she saw a ghost. The latest beam of the sun, falling on a mountain opposite, had shone back into the ice-cavern; and seemingly deep within, in the grave azure light, she fancied she saw a face turned toward her. She even thought she saw Charles's yellow hair, and the selfsame smile his lips had worn when he bent down to her before he fell. It could be but a fancy. She went home, and was silent with her friends about what had happened. In the moonlight she went back, and again the next morning before dawn. She told no one of her going; but the old guide met her at the door, and walked si-

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lently behind her. She had slept, the glacier ever present in her dreams.

The sun had not yet risen when she came; and she sat a long time in the cavern, listening to the murmur of the river, flowing under the glacier at her feet. Slowly the dawn began, and again she seemed to see the shimmer of a face—such a face as one sees in the coals of a dying fire. Then the full sun came over the eastern mountain, and the guide heard a woman's cry. There before her was Charles Knollys! The face seemed hardly pale; and there was the same faint smile—a smile like her memory of it, five and forty years gone by. Safe in the clear ice, still, unharmed, there lay—O God! not her Charles; not the Charles of her own thought, who had lived through life with her and shared her sixty years; not the old man she had borne thither in her mind—but a boy, a boy of one and twenty lying asleep, a ghost from another world coming to confront her from the distant past, immortal in the immortality of the glacier. There was his quaint coat, of the fashion of half a century before; his blue eyes open; his young, clear brow; all the form of the past she had forgotten; and she

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his bride stood there to welcome him, with her wrinkles, her bent figure, and thin white hairs. She was living, he was dead; and she was two and forty years older than he.

Then at last the long-kept tears came to her, and she bent her white head in the snow. The old man came up with his pick, silently, and began working in the ice. The woman lay weeping, and the boy, with his still, faint smile, lay looking at them, through the clear ice-veil, from his open eyes.

I believe that the professor found his bullet; I know not. I believe that the scientific world rang with his name and the thesis that he published on the glacier's motion, and the changeless temperature his father's lost thermometer had shown. All this you may read. I know no more.

But I know that in the English church-yard there are now two graves, and a single stone, to Charles Knollys and Mary, his wife; and the boy of one and twenty sleeps there with his bride of sixty-three; his young frame with her old one, his yellow hair beside her white. And I do not know that there is not some place, not here, where they are still together,

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and he is twenty-one and she is still eighteen. I do not know this; but I know that all the pamphlets of the German doctor cannot tell me it is false.

Meantime the great Pasterzen glacier moves on, and the rocks with it; and the mountain flings his shadow of the planets in its face.

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THE THREE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EILEEN

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THE THREE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EILEEN

NOT far from the great cliffs of Lisdoomvarna upon the wild west coast of Ireland, there stands, four square to the Atlantic winds, a gaunt, gray, lonely house of stone; all mossy with the breathing of that tempered sea. This is Greyscourt Castle; and here live the Irish Greys. Castle, it is called by all the neighborhood, and has been called for centuries, although it has not tower nor keep, only thick stone walls of mortared masonry, unburnable. No cover is in the boggy moor, near by the house; and in the great hall, where dances were given in the older times, between each pair of partners was a triangular niche in the wall, well placed for love-making, and its apex was a narrow window, fit to fire a musket through. For the old Welsh-Norman fighter who had sailed from Wales to win

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this wild sovereignty had held it, as he won it, by his right hand. So far ago was that—almost in Strongbow's time—that his descendants had been forgotten, as they lived there, far beyond the Pale, and intermarried with the Irishry and became more Irish than they, only that they were chiefs and brooked no Saxon nearer than a two days' ride—for them, a day to ride and kill and burn his hold, another longer day to drive home his cattle, the Greys now riding slower, with the daughters at their saddle-bows. Thus they won their wives; thus so often that the girls in Clare or Donegal those days half counted on being courted in this manner. Such were the mothers of the Greys of Clare; though if the suitor did not please them they had been known to turn with a dagger, on the very pommel of his horse, and strike, and failing his throat to find a nearer use. But it was said that those who fought the fiercest, so that they were forced even to and from the altar, made, after all, the best wives. Only late in the last century had their manners changed and the Grey then living taken a wife from town.

From London she came; and she had been

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a Lady Clare somebody, and she was the cause that Captain John Charlton was riding moodily, sullenly—like a beaten dog, he would have phrased it—over from the barrack-town that day. She had asked him to. He was invited to come over to take leave of Eileen before his regiment left, he with it, for India. It was understood that the leave was to be definitive; and there was to be no correspondence after it. These were the grandmother's orders; and it had taken all her skill and all her proud daughter's haughtiness, and much beseeching from the honest squireen, to bring him to what they termed "a sense of his position;" and perhaps this sense would not have carried him very far. But then there came a word from Eileen herself; so he had come.

For Eileen Grey, at eighteen, was the most beautiful girl in the world. When you looked into her eyes, there was the fire of all the battles of her fighting fathers, and all the light that twenty generations of fair maidens had garnered in their hearts from mountain-mist and moor; and then there was for one—only for one—the depth and softness of the sea. But Charlton had been that one.

He had met her a year before—the second

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year of his regiment's quartering. Before that, she had been a wild slip of a girl riding about on a wilder pony, her dark hair blowing a cloud beyond the pony's mane. At eighteen, her loveliness suddenly took shape, and she stepped down from off her pony and was seen of men; among them poor Jack Charlton. Lady Clare had seen it earlier. For the Greys were now so very poor that, after two generations of absentee life in Dublin or even London, and later seasons at Dinard or Boulogne, they had come back to live upon their own estates—Lady Clare and her daughter-in-law, for motives of economy, against Eileen's bringing-out; but to her and her father for unalloyed delight. And now, just before her presentation, in this foolish dancing at neighbors' houses or on the hunting-fields, this thing had happened! For Eileen was a great hunter; most men would hesitate to follow her lead. Her physical courage she inherited, with her eyes.

Of course (said her mother) but one thing remained. They must go to London at once. They did not know how far the thing had gone, at least on the child's part; but he was openly a suitor. Eileen had frankly scorned

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all men she ever met, but this one she danced with several times. She had let him ride side by side with her after—yes, and next after—the hounds. She had stood like a young pine and flashed her lovely eyes when her grandmother spoke slightingly of him. For he was but a captain, with his pay; his father—for these competitive examinations do so mix up things—was not even in the army. But her father pleaded with her; with him she was more docile. Then poor Jack was bullied, blamed, browbeaten, made ashamed of himself. A child not out! A penniless captain, who took advantage of his years, before she had seen another than himself—too innocent to think her dancing or riding once or twice could mean— What had she said to him?

Nothing, Charlton admitted. Then there was nothing between them. Luckily, just then his regiment was ordered abroad. There was nothing between them; he must go and tell her so. But this John Charlton flatly refused to do. Well, then, he must go and let her tell him so; or rather (for this were making a mountain of a mole-hill) he must go himself and see that it was so. At this stage of the argument Charlton had not seen her for three

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weeks; and the cantonment was gossiping about it all. He had, therefore, kept away from her; to that much he had been brought.

But that alone would not do. It would but raise more comment. He must not seem afraid to go to see her. On the contrary, he must go and take his leave of her—and of her grandmother, Lady Clare, and the family—definitely, definitively. He must tell her he was never coming back—at least not for a great many years. And he must privately promise never to write to her.

Charlton said he had no intention of writing to her.

Well, then, he must come and say good-by—see how prettily she would behave—in fact, must pattern himself upon it. He must not go away like a thief in the dark; he must call openly, bring his manservant, and stay to dinner.

John Charlton was strongly of opinion that the dinner was unnecessary; and as to the call, that he should either come as a suitor or stay away; in short, that no good comes of pretence in this world, and one should frankly face things as they are, and facts should be recognized as such.

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Thereupon Lady Clare told him, through poor old Gerald, that he ridiculously misconstrued the situation, and insisted the more that he should come to see it with his own eyes; and on the following day a written invitation reached him in the following shape:

"GREYSCOURT CASTLE, September 22, 187—.

"DEAR CAPTAIN CHARLTON:

"Mamma wishes you to come to dinner, very informally, next Friday, and if convenient pass the night.

"I hope you will come to say good-by before you go.

"Yours very sincerely,

"E. GREY.

Superscribed

"To CAPTAIN CHARLTON,

"1st Yorkshire Regiment."

Now there were two points about this missive that Charlton did not fail to notice—otherwise, perhaps, he had not gone. One was, the making a paragraph before the second sentence; the other was, the signature "*E.* Grey." Miss Grey's name was Alice; it was only her pet name that was Eileen. Therefore, the Captain went. But luckily, he wrote that he would not stay the night. He preferred riding back in the early morning.

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It is unnecessary for our history to describe the scenery of the environment of Greyscourt Castle. The reader, if he did not skip it, would forget it; though Charlton remembered it for a considerable period of years. The social environment of the dinner is more to our purpose; and it consisted exclusively of Eileen's family. There was Lady Clare, and Lady Grey, and a maiden aunt. And there were Eileen's father and three brothers, all very red in the face and somewhat self-conscious. If Eileen herself had sought to make herself unattractive in a plain white frock, she failed; for it was the dress he liked her best in. And if her hand gave cold greeting, the effect was spoiled by the blush that accompanied it. This was also noticed by the grandmother, and one has reason to believe it led to some remarks she made to Eileen while the men were sitting over claret.

At dinner the conversation had been of runs and horses; and Eileen, although Charlton sat next her, made no remark of any importance. After dinner the brothers talked somewhat also of India, though this was felt to be a dangerous subject. Altogether the dinner was, socially, a failure; and if the last

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sleepy half-hour that the men devote to the women is stupid at all dinners, it was particularly so at this. The two older ladies made remarks that, even with their training, seemed perfunctory; the brothers made no remarks at all; Sir Gerald pulled his whiskers before the fire; Charlton, upon whom a vague sense of irritation had been growing, made no effort to relieve the situation; and Eileen sat in a far-off dark corner beside her grandmother, quite pale and with a certain appearance of having been but recently reduced to silence.

At last Charlton could get up to go; it was scarce midnight, but he made pretext of the long ride. The three brothers stood up at "attention;" Sir Gerald straightened himself before the fire; Charlton got through their hearty handgrips and Sir Gerald's kindly stammer (you see how unimportant *I* am, was the quite evident meaning of his manner), successfully encountered his lady, and then had quite a conversation with the Dowager. (It was perhaps an error of judgment to reserve Eileen for the last; Lady Clare felt it, but could hardly change his tactics at the parade. After all, he was going

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away.) At last Eileen came forward to make her little speech. She said she hoped they might hear of him from time to time, and put her hand in his; Charlton but gripped it —having no conversational shot, small-sized enough for the occasion—not half so hard as he had gripped her brothers', and he certainly intended to hold it no longer. All seemed well over. But he felt the cold fingers relax in his, she sank to her chair; there was a general movement forward, a rush by the Lady Clare, a gasp from Eileen, a cry from John Charlton. She had fainted.

Then cried poor Charlton, standing upright and turning savagely to the father, while the ladies bent angrily over the girl—and the knowing she could not hear gave him greater courage:

"By God, sir, I am going to India, and I have come here to-night, and your mother may tell Eileen what she likes, but I wish you to understand that I love your daughter now and always."

"Take him away," cried Lady Clare; but it was not necessary for the three big brothers to hustle him out. "I'll find my way to the door," he shouted; and, good as his word, he

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threw himself upon his horse and a sovereign to the servant, and took himself away—rather faster than he had intended.

II

"ALWAYS" is a large word, rarely to be used to women, and when so used, one which the hearer is apt to qualify. Whether Eileen heard it or not was a matter of frequent speculation to John Charlton during the voyage and for some months in India. Then his speculations were terminated by the receipt of the following letter from Lady Grey (he had written to Eileen upon his arrival at Bombay, and then, getting no answer, had written again when his regiment had reached its post. What he had said, perhaps, may be inferred from Lady Grey's answer):

"18A PRINCES GATE TERRACE,
"LONDON, S. W., June, 187–.

("So they have left Ireland," thought John Charlton.)

"DEAR CAPTAIN CHARLTON:

"Although my daughter has quite recovered from her unfortunate weakness when you left (a weakness which

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was purely physical), she is still hardly strong enough to answer your *most interesting* letters herself. And I think, in view of her many engagements, she can hardly spare time to begin a continued correspondence. I am sure you will concur in the wisdom of this decision. You will remember that you yourself gave your promise to my husband not to write to her; and while she was most interested in the accounts you give of India, and the prospects of our army there, I feel, in your own interest, that a protracted correspondence might lead to a false impression on your part. As to what you tell her of your future plans, she wishes me to say that she will always be glad to hear of your success in your profession. Believe me, dear Captain Charlton,

"Yours most sincerely,

"ALICE WILLOUGHBY GREY."

"In his profession!" There was a cowardly brutality about this second-hand epistle which possibly justified our poor captain in crumpling it up to a ball and making a vicious shot with it for the waste-paper basket of the regimental club where he was sitting. It certainly did not justify his second action, which was to pick it up, smoothe it out, and wad his breast-pocket with it through a fortnight's shooting trip.

During this fortnight he did not read it often; but its words seemed to permeate the fibre of his being. He certainly could

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have repeated them by heart after the second reading. But con them as he would, they led to but one of two conclusions: they indicated either the cowardice or—he groaned at the conclusion—the utter heartlessness of the Eileen he had loved. And though the brave companion of his hunts had shown no signs of the former quality—except perhaps when he took leave of her, and even that was perhaps the bravest thing that she could do—he could not bring himself to choose the latter alternative. Good men are built that way.

But one thing was clear: the incident, as we say, was closed. He was not to write to her; for ten years he never did. He was to forget her; for ten years he tried. If there had been at first some faint hope, unavowed of his head, that she might send some kinder word of farewell, that hope, too, wore away with time. He had no news of her; his memory of her very self grew blurred, blurred to a dream of vague girlish loveliness, a face he saw sometimes in the evening hills. No man lives without some ideal, lost or to be found; Eileen's had come to such with him. It had come to such before his second war; had

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come to such when he won the Victoria Cross, a bit of bronze only now to him. Milton wrote the "Paradise Lost" to justify the ways of God to man; no Milton yet has sought to justify the ways to man of woman. This agreeable epigram was, perhaps, the last thought Charlton had vouchsafed to his Irish maid. He did not mean to give his life to a memory. If he thought of it once again, when he was gazetted Lieutenant-Colonel, it was to wonder smilingly what Lady Grey would write now. Since the V. C. had not roused Eileen's interest, he had none. The Celtic blood was fickle. Yet what a lovely face she had! Had had! her daughters might soon be marriageable. But after this, he really did not think of her again.

And some years after this, there came a girl to India, the daughter of Charlton's brigade commander. She had been brought up in a quiet English school and was a fair slip of a thing, with a certain prettiness, of the hedge-rose sort. She blushed if a man spoke to her, and never rode to hounds nor engaged in competitive athletics; perhaps *per contra*, she never flirted. The most ill-natured ladies who were addicted to that common di-

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version scarce thought hardly of her for the lack of it. Her conduct implied no criticism; it was as if she were too delicate to bear a breath of comment. But the men rather liked her.

Marsden—Miss Marsden—she was called; she was not commonly spoken of by her first name; it was believed to be Mary. It took the regiment and their ladies some months to find out so much as this. And after two or three years its analysis of her character had not got beyond the point we have indicated. She lived at home with General Marsden and her mother. Imagine, then, the incredulity with which the rumor that she was fond of Colonel Charlton was first received; for respectable modern life lends itself easily to the discussion of young ladies' affections before they are avowed—a vulgarism which the old Greyscourt manner at least escaped. But as the incredulity soon gave place to sympathy it was really amazing how gently her secret was treated. If Charlton was apt to be invited to meet her, it was managed in the most natural way in the world; was he not next in rank to her father? Charlton, the men said —good man. The army world is a kind one,

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when not cabin'd in too small a post; and all the women, and half the men, and Mrs. Marsden, and I fear the girl herself, understood the situation long before our friend Charlton. When he did——

To begin with, he had a big, warm heart, with a great hunger for expressing it. And like all such men with such a history he was possessed with an infinite melting tenderness, even to dog or beast, that showed him any affection. When John Charlton found that this dear English girl was glad to see him, liked him—liked him for himself—his bowels turned to very water. He felt as, when a boy, he had picked up a poor wounded robin and tried to warm it back to life in his breast. And then he, uncared for, the despised, condemned, not worthy a word—that she should actually love him! What was the memory of a face? The moment the word love came into his mind the thing was in his heart.

He grew bolder. He made up his mind it was true. He saw her oftener and oftener. And as he looked at her, still always gentle, but now with a certain pride of happiness, he wondered at the goodness of God that he

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could be so happy himself. Yes; he would speak. It was all well; he would tell her to-morrow—dear, lovely, loving Mary Marsden—he thought, as he walked home beneath the large southern stars.

He shared a house with his major—Tom Brandon—a bachelor, as are most majors, a cynic, as are all of them, and the favorite confidant of the regiment in its love affairs. Yes, he didn't mind telling old Tom to-night. Tom would be so pleased at hearing what he meant to do; Tom, too, would tell him, of his old bachelor experience, whether it really could be true that she might care for him, a dozen years her senior. Somehow Charlton had no doubt in this proposal; that thought pained him afterward.

So it happened that Tom Brandon, coming in late that night, found Charlton lying over his desk, crying over a letter like a girl.

"Read it, Tom—this is no time for secrets."

Brandon took it up, between finger and thumb, gingerly; it was quite wet, and bore a home postmark. He put it down again.

"Read it," said John, impatiently. "My God, someone must know."

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The Major rang the bell, called for two pegs of brandy, settled his eyeglasses on his nose, and read it.

"GREYSCOURT CASTLE, December, 188—.

"I want to tell you that they are going to marry me to Lord Brayham, but I have always loved you and love you still. ALICE GREY."

"No superscription," remarked the Major, after a pause.

Charlton pushed the envelope over to him, addressed "Lt.-Col. Charlton" plainly enough.

"Alice Grey—it sounds like a novel——"

Charlton gave a groan resembling "Eileen."

"Take your brandy," said the Major, sharply. "How long has this been—? Since you left, of course." He drank his own. "I feared something of the sort."

Charlton got up and paced the room. The Major watched him. Suddenly:

"By the way, why didn't you write?" he said.

For answer, his colonel sat down at the desk and unlocked a drawer; from it he took Lady Grey's old letter, and gave it him to read.

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"Ha!" said he, "Lord Brayham—formerly Braham—was a rich builder, I believe. What are you going to do?"

Charlton showed him the draft of a telegraph. "My man has just taken a copy to the office," said he. It ran—leaving out the address—

"I sail Saturday from Bombay. Pray answer Aden or Alexandria.—J. C."

"My God, man, you're not *going?*"

"I must," said Charlton.

"And Mary Marsden——"

"I shall tell her——"

"*Tell* her!" vociferated Brandon; the "tell" was like a pistol-shot.

"The truth," said Charlton, simply, as if it were but a question.

III

WHAT took place at the interview between Mary Marsden and Colonel Charlton no one ever knew. The first intimation the people had of the Colonel's actions was the astounding information that he had sent in his papers and gone home to England. At first it was supposed that he meant to retire from active

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service on his marriage; this was surprising enough—one could only guess that he had inherited a title or estates. But then it was remarked that their engagement had not been formally announced; that there was no engagement was, at first, hardly credited. It was well known that Charlton had made a long call on Miss Marsden in the morning before he left. Yet he had neither seen, as it appeared, her father nor her mother; this fact got gradually known in army circles. As it was not quite a case of breaking an announced engagement, no questions could be asked by the most indiscreet woman friend of the parties most nearly concerned; they could but draw inferences from the entire silence of General Marsden and his wife—a silence which was not a pleasant one—and the too evident unhappiness of their daughter. "Poor Mary should show more spirit," said one lady to another; and the men, when they heard this thing said, did not always wait to swear until they left the lady saying it. So the cloud of indignation was slow in gathering about poor Jack's memory. The bald truth was not credible. The men were driven at last to ask it of the Major, his

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friend. "He telegraphed for home leave—that's all I know of the whole damned business," spluttered Brandon, angrily. "I suppose he had as much reason as any other good man when he goes to hell, blank blank it!" But the other men hearing, changed the pronoun *it* to *him*. The storm now broke indeed. "Glad he had the decency to leave the army," was the best thing said of Colonel Charlton by the friends of his life. Old friends beside whom he had fought, friends whom he had led, who would have followed him to the death, now cursed him for the shame of it. Charlton had "gone under." The Major kept silence. The Marsdens did not know how he was blamed. And to poor Jack himself—

He knew well enough, parading the deck in solitude upon the steamer, cutting the people he knew, and being cut by them—he knew well enough how his old friends must feel. Even the Major, who knew the facts, had shown him some of that. But no one could blame, condemn, despise him more than he himself. Yet he *had* to do it. That, it is true, was no defence. And Charlton was prepared to take his damning uncomplainingly, in this world and the next—Charlton, who in

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all his life had done his fellow-beings no wilful wrong. The fates afflict the innocent with agonies the guilty cannot feel. Yet, he would go to Eileen.

Not that he thought himself innocent. But the world was built that way. A stronger force than his had ordered him, John Charlton, to go wrong. What mattered, compared with her, had he kept selfishly right? It was the fierce anticipation of her message that was now only in his mind, her telegraph or letter of reply; and this grew fiercer as they came to Aden.

There was no telegraph for him at Aden. He went aboard the ship and paced it, like a caged animal, through all the voyage up the Red Sea. At last they got to Suez. There was no telegraph for him at Suez; though several came for others on the ship. The canal trip was slow: a day or two's delay was promised; he took the train and ran up to Cairo. There, in a newspaper at Shepheard's hotel, he found the announcement of Eileen's wedding with Lord Brayham.

There was certainly now no reason why Charlton should go to England. But it was quite impossible for him to return to India.

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Whether it was this, or the mere impetus of that impulse, that uncontrollable impulse which had wrecked his life, one could hardly say. But in the wreck of great schemes the carrying out of little plans goes on. Charlton returned the following morning to Port Said as he had planned, and went with his steamer as far as Marseilles. There he did what was, perhaps, as good a thing as any: he went into a long fever and spent some months in a public hospital.

Charlton had no parents living, no friends in England, no relations nearer than a mother's cousin. There was no one to write for him, in his delirium, and Charlton had no desire to write during his slow convalescence. And no one in India wrote to him. When he had come to consciousness again he had found himself tended by a quiet-voiced sister of charity and a kindly old, domino-playing French doctor. He liked their company as well as anyone's, and expressing his readiness to pay for the favor, he had himself removed to a sort of convalescent hospital with a garden in the hills above the city, where the doctor continued to visit him long after his physical health was restored. Then he took a

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carriage and drove slowly through Southern France. Finally—nearly a year after leaving India—he arrived in London.

There he could not keep entirely to himself. Decency demanded that he should pay certain official visits; and he met a few army men he had known in India. He went once or twice to the United Service Club. But a less sensitive person than Charlton would have seen, in the manner of his acquaintances, and even if he had not known it already, that he was a disgraced man. People in India must have written home about him. The discovery bore no new pang for Charlton; he belonged to those whose self-condemnation is a harder thing to bear than all the world's disdain. He had no desire to make new friends; and after the briefest possible delay betook himself, with a few books and a dog, to a little seaboard village on the Yorkshire coast not far from the region of his birth. There even he made no friends, except the children playing on the beach. The judgment of dogs and children of a man is sometimes better than his fellow-men's.

His health, still, was far from good; and he passed a winter there before he began to

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think what he should do. For he had no intention of doing nothing in the world; but a soldier can do nothing but fight, and just then there was no fighting going on. His return to the regular army was out of the question; as much so as his return to India. He searched the newspapers for "a lead," as he would have called it. Like most men of action Charlton was a great reader of newspapers; that is, of the things that were happening in the world. He did not read the fashionable intelligence, and so missed the great details that attended the home-coming of the Brayhams; but one day he read a brief telegram from Cairo, announcing, as an impossible rumor, the destruction of an Anglo-Egyptian army under Hicks Pasha. The rumor did not seem impossible to Charlton; and the next day found him at London offering his services to command Egyptian troops. But a man who has left the regular army without apparent cause arouses question, even when he demands but the equivalent grade in an irregular force. Charlton was but promised that his application "would be considered." And, too late, Charlton went back and read in the papers of Gordon's sudden transfer-

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ence from the Belgian service; too late he read that he had started alone for Khartoum. Gordon had seen his way, alone; and Charlton blamed himself. For some months he followed events; then he had a letter—it was hardly more than a line—from Major Brandon in India, stating that inquiries were being made about him there. It was the last blow to his self-respect. And then for some strange reason, perhaps but human nature, a great longing came upon him to see Eileen. It was during one of the visits he now so often made to London; someone had mentioned Lady Brayham as being there, her house the most desired of that season. He had had no desire to see her; perhaps now he did not consciously attempt to see her. But one night, at a crowded Foreign Office reception, he stood by the stairway as she came down. A beautiful woman she was indeed; he thought so, as he watched her curiously down the stair; her white body rising breast and shoulders above a billow of white lace, a band of diamonds in the dark hair, now carefully coiled, that he had last seen flying in the Irish winds. He saw her meet his gaze, stop still, as if to check a start forward. It was so

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crowded on the stairway that she was slow in getting down; she had ample time to think what she would do. He did not go away: so that her bare arm touched his shoulder, as she achieved her passage by him without a sign of recognition.

IV

GORDON had seen his way; but months after this, the guest of some officers in the garrison at Wady-Halfa, Charlton was still waiting. Then at last the appointment came; he had been given a command commensurate with his old rank. And despite all that had happened, Charlton believed—perhaps, did he like to believe?—it was done through Lady Brayham's influence. Then came the advance; Wolseley had gone the slow way by the river; and Charlton found himself, one night, in command of an outpost in the desert, with two regiments of Egyptian troops, before a vast horde of Soudanese. Only his captains and subalterns were English; and all that day they had been training their rank and file in the quick-firing guns. They had not to make the attack; the Arabs were so numerous that they could be counted on for

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that. And the degenerate Egyptians, some of whom had been with Hicks himself, were trembling in their tents.

That night Charlton made a speech. He called his little force out, in parade formation, officers in front; he was not even mounted; and he told them he would not be mounted on the morrow. He had not men enough for a hollow square; it would reduce their fire too much, and so he told them. Everything depended upon their quick-firing guns. Half a mile of level, rippled sand lay beneath the little ridge where they were posted; and over that half-mile of country bullets enough must fly to cripple the attack before they reached the English line with their long spears. Charlton knew the smaller Egyptians would never battle steel to steel against the Soudanese. If but their spearmen could live to touch his front, the day was lost. But the desert in front was marked out, by his orders, like the posts of a race-course. At the thousand-yard posts, they were to begin firing; at each hundred yards advance made by the mass of the enemy they should depress their elevation, until they came to point-blank range. He adjured his officers to see that

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this was done. Until the firing actually began, he promised them, the Englishmen should stay in front; thereafter they should fall just behind, with the file-closers. "And I promise you," Charlton closed, "if you do as I have told, with the new quick-firing guns, not one Soudanese spearman shall live to reach your lines; but, by Allah! if you break or hesitate, everyone of you will be killed. Now cheer!"

The cheer was feeble; and the Englishmen passed an anxious night, each one asking of the other whether his company would stand. In the morning a horde of white-shrouded, gaunt, black giants filled the western desert, and came on like a dust-cloud, yelling Allah. Charlton stood unmounted in front of his two ranks, and every Englishman stood so, steady in front of his company. Each one could hear the men of his command shivering behind him, and had the moral courage not to look around, or say another word, save for the men to hold their fire. The Arabs began firing at the half-mile; then threw away their guns and came on with spears and double-bladed crescent knives. But it happened just as Charlton had foretold. The

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last black giant, leaping and bounding at the battle's head, fell dead a rod before the middle company. And now the desert way lay clear for Wolseley to Khartoum.

Success brings a reaction. This was one splendid day. But the morrow the main body had rejoined him, and Charlton lost his interest with his responsibility. Moreover, the news had come that Khartoum had fallen.

He sat in his own tent, next the headquarters, but nearer the river. It was unknown what now would be their orders. They had moved across to the big bend and were waiting. It was "but a sentimental campaign," as their leader had complained; and now, with Gordon's death, the sentiment was ended. No one knew what they would do next. There was the policy of "butcher and bolt;" and there was the policy of meek, little-Anglican submission, dear always to the Middlesex ratepayer, later sure to be sanctified by Exeter Hall. Meantime, their only excitement lay in the mails, which had been pushed up the river by a little stern-wheeler from Philæ. Charlton had had one letter—a long one—the first real letter that even his friend Brandon had written him. This was it:

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"SIMLA, ——, 188—.

"DEAR CHARLTON:

"If I have not written before, it was because there was nothing to say—to you—and a d—d sight too much said of you. That I suppose you know, and were prepared for. As you know, I have no criticism to offer; but the best thing I could do was to shut up. That I have done, and I suppose people drew their inferences.

"Well, now you have got a command again, and I think you ought to know how you got it. Word came here long before that your name was up; and I am bound to tell you that the slanging was awful. Fellows that never could write a letter took up a stubby pen and stumbled into a formal 'renseignement' about you. If you had jilted her, I really don't think it would have been so bad. But just because there was no engagement, and because you just went home—and didn't seem to inherit either a title or a wife to account for it—the jaw was awful. It wasn't helped, either, by the fact that Mary Marsden wouldn't look at a mother's son of them.

"Last year more definite statements arrived, that you were still unmarried, and up for service again—but not in India. I warrant they wrote again. But it wasn't old Marsden that did the job—he kept quiet; in fact he wouldn't talk a bit, and this got 'em the madder. No more would I—but there was a new brigade commander (Lister, I think you never met him), and they talked the more to him. One night we were all at the club—there may have been one or two ladies, but it was just after the gym' races, and it wasn't supposed—we men were all on the veranda over our sodas. Lister, evidently with intention, spoke of you; and of course they jumped upon you very hard. I don't remember just what was said, but I know young Fielden closed with the remark that

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you had had the blooming cheek to ask for a command in Egypt, seeing you couldn't get one here. Then through an open window from the ladies' end came out Miss Marsden, her father following.

"'I—I could not help hearing what you were saying of Colonel Charlton,' said she, faltering a moment, but then going on in a clear voice—almost, if one might say it of her—boldly:

"'And I wish to say that I am sure of Colonel Charlton's honor as I am of any of you gentlemen's—and I think I know him better,' said she! Then she bowed a little, as every man had jumped to his feet, and walked out, as her old father had been urging her. We had all thought she would faint; not a bit, she only blushed to the ears and walked, eyes-front, rosy-faced. When she got off to a room by herself, I heard afterward, she fell in a heap and cried.

"No one, at first, had a word to say. 'By God, that's a fine girl and knows when she's right,' said Lister, at last; and just then that new Captain Norman, with the suspicious nose (you remember, an exam' commission—came from East London, somewhere), said—he said, in his nice new cockney slang: 'My! what a give-away!' I'm afraid I hit him a little; I know he fell over the back rail, on the grass, but it was just the end and few even saw it, and he hasn't told.

"In my humble opinion, this and your V. C. made Lister write a letter. Trust the sport is good up there, and you will get up in time. Pity you haven't Roberts.

"Yours ever, T. S. BRANDON."

Charlton leaned on the letter folded across his knee, and looked across the waste of

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amber sand. The sun had just gone down, his creamy gold burning in the still river below the camp. Just a ribbon of green, like a flower-band, marked what was Egypt from the Nubian waste; so high were they upon the Nile.

Charlton swung the open letter in his hand. He looked across the desert, to Khartoum. That war was over.

But it did not seem to him he saw his way——

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OUR CONSUL AT CARLSRUHE

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OUR CONSUL AT CARLSRUHE

DIED.—*In Baden, Germany, Sept. 22, 1877, Charles Austin Pinckney, late U. S. Consul at Carlsruhe, aged sixty years.*

There: most stories of men's lives end with the epitaph, but this of Pinckney's shall begin there. If we, as haply God or Devil can, could unroof the houses of men's souls—if their visible works were of their hearts rather than their brains—we should know strange things. And this alone, of all the possible, is certain. For bethink you, how men appear to their Creator, as he looks down into the soul, that matrix of their visible lives we find so hard to localize and yet so sure to be. For all of us believe in self, and few of us but are forced, one way or another, to grant existence to some selves outside of us. Can you not fancy that men's souls, like their farms, would show here a patch of grain, and there the tares; there the weeds and here the sow-

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ing; over this place the rain has been, and that other, to one looking down upon it from afar, seems brown and desolate, wasted by fire or made arid by the drouth? In this man's life is a poor beginning, but a better end; in this other's we see the foundations, the staging, and the schemes of mighty structures, now stopped, given over, or abandoned; of vessels, fashioned for the world's seas, now rotting on the stocks. Of this one all seems ready but the launching; of that the large keelson only has been laid; but both alike have died unborn, and the rain falls upon them, and the mosses grow: the sound of labor is far off, and the scene of work is silent. Small laws make great changes; slight differences of adjustment end quick in death. Small, now, they would seem to us; but to the infinite mind all things small and great are alike; the spore of rust in the ear is very slight, but a famine in the corn will shake the world.

Pinckney's life the world called lazy; his leisure was not fruitful, and his sixty years of life were but a gentleman's. Some slight lesion may have caused paralysis of energy, some clot of heart's blood pressed upon the

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soul: I make no doubt our doctors could diagnose it, if they knew a little more. Tall and slender, he had a strange face, a face with a young man's beauty; his white hair gave a charm to the rare smile, like new snow to the spring, and the slight stoop with which he walked was but a grace the more. In short, Pinckney was interesting. Women raved about him; young men fell in love with him; and if he was selfish, the fault lay between him and his Maker, not visible to other men. There are three things that make a man interesting in his old age: the first, being heroism, we may put aside; but the other two are regret and remorse. Now, Mr. Pinckney's fragrance was not of remorse—women and young men would have called it heroism. It may have been. As much heroism as could be practised in thirty-odd years of Carlsruhe.

Why Carlsruhe? That was the keynote of inquiry; and no one knew. Old men spoke unctuously of youthful scandals; women dreamed. I suspect even Mrs. Pinckney wondered, about as much as the ploughed field may wonder at the silence of the autumn. But Pinckney limped gracefully about the sleepy avenues which converge at the Grand Duke's

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palace, like a wakeful page in the castle of the Sleeping Beauty. Pinckney was a friend of the Grand Duke's, and perhaps it was a certain American flavor persisting in his manners which made him seem the only man at the Baden Court who met his arch-serene altitude on equal terms. For one who had done nothing and possessed little, Pinckney certainly preserved a marvellous personal dignity. His four daughters were all married to scions of Teutonic nobility; and each one in turn had asked him for the Pinckney arms, and quartered them into the appropriate check-square with as much grave satisfaction as he felt for the far-off patch of Hohenzollern or of Hapsburg in sinister chief. Pinckney had laughed at it and referred them to the Declaration of Independence, clause the first; but his wife had copied them from some spoon or sugar-bowl. She was very fond of Pinckney, and no more questioned him why they always lived in Carlsruhe than a Persian would the sun for rising East. Now and then they went to Baden, and her cup was full.

Pinckney died of a cold, unostentatiously, and was buried like a gentleman; though the

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Grand Duke actually wanted to put the Court in mourning for three days, and consulted with his chamberlain whether it would do. Mrs. Pinckney had preceded him by some six years; but she was an appendage, and her husband's deference had always seemed in Carlsruhe a trifle strained. It was only in these last six years that anyone had gossiped of remorse, in answer to the sphinx-like question of his marble brow. Such questions vex the curious. Furrows trouble nobody—money matters are enough for them; but white smoothness in old age is a bait, and tickles curiosity. Some said, at home he was a devil, and beat his wife.

But Pinckney never beat his wife. Late in the last twilight of her life she had called him to her, and excluded even the four daughters, with their stout and splendid barons; then, alone with him, she looked to him and smiled. And suddenly his gentleman's heart took a jump, and the tears fell on her still soft hands—Had he not made happy even one of the three?—I suppose some old road was opened again in the gray matter of his brain. Mrs. Pinckney smiled the more strongly and said—not quite so terribly as

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Mrs. Amos Barton: "Have I made you happy, dearest Charles?" And Charles, the perfect-mannered, said she had; but said it stammering. "Then," said she, "I die very happily, dear." And she did; and Pinckney continued to live at Carlsruhe.

The only activities of Pinckney's mind were critical. He was a wonderful orator, but he rarely spoke. People said he could have been a great writer, but he never wrote, at least, nothing original. He was the art and continental-drama critic of several English and American reviews; in music, he was a Wagnerian, which debarred him from writing of it except in German; but the little Court Theatre at Carlsruhe has Wagner's portrait over the drop-curtain, and the consul's box was never empty when the mighty heathen legends were declaimed or the holy music of the Grail was sung. In fiction of the earnest sort, and poetry, Pinckney's critical pen showed a marvellous magic, striking the scant springs of the author's inspiration through the most rocky ground of incident or style. He had a curious sympathy with youthful tenderness. But, after all, as every young compatriot who went to Baden said,

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What the deuce and all did he live in Baden for? Miles Breeze had said it in '50, when he made the grand tour with his young wife, and dined with him in Baden-Baden; that is, when Breeze dined with him, for his young wife was indisposed and could not go. Miles Breeze, junior, had said it, as late as '76, when he went abroad, ostensibly for instruction, after leaving college. He had letters to Mr. Pinckney, who was very kind to the young Baltimorean, and greatly troubled the Grand Duke his Serenity, by presenting him as a relative of the Bonapartes. Many another American had said it, and even some leading politicians: he might have held office at home; but Pinckney continued to live in Carlsruhe.

His critical faculties seemed sharpened, after his wife's death, as his hair grew whiter; and if you remember how he looked before, you must have noticed that the greatest change was in the expression of his face. There was one faint downward line at either side of his mouth, and the counterpart at the eyes; a doubtful line which, faint as it was graven, gave a strange amount of shading to the face. And in speaking of him still earlier,

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you must remember to take your india-rubber and rub out this line from his face. This done, the face is still serious; but it has a certain light, a certain air of confidence, of determination, regretful though it be, which makes it loved by women. Women can love a desperate, but never begin to love a beaten cause. Women fell in love with Pinckney, for the lightning does strike twice in the same place; but his race was rather that of Lohengrin than of the Asra, and he saw it, or seemed to see it, not. Still, in these times those downward lines had not come, and there was a certain sober light in his face as of a sorrowful triumph. This was in the epoch of his greatest interestingness to women.

When he first came to Carlsruhe he was simply the new consul, nothing more; a handsome young man, almost in his honeymoon, with a young and pretty wife. He had less presence in those days, and seemed absorbed in his new home, or deeply sunk in something; people at first fancied he was a poet, meditating a great work, which finished, he would soon leave Carlsruhe. He was never seen to look at a woman, not

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overmuch at his wife, and was not yet popular in society.

But it was true that he was newly married. He was married in Boston, in '43 or '44, to Emily Austin, a far-off cousin of his, whom he had known (he himself was a Carolinian) during his four years at Cambridge. For his four years in Cambridge were succeeded by two more at the Law School; then he won a great case against Mr. Choate, and was narrowly beaten in an election for Congress; after that it surprised no one to hear the announcement of his engagement to Miss Austin, for his family was unexceptionable and he had a brilliant future. The marriage came in the fall, rather sooner than people expected, at King's Chapel. They went abroad, as was natural; and then he surprised his friends and hers by accepting his consulship and staying there. And they were imperceptibly, gradually, slowly, and utterly forgotten.

The engagement came out in the spring of '43. And in June of that year young Pinckney had gone to visit his *fiancée* at Newport. Had you seen him there, you would have seen him in perhaps the brightest *rôle*

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that fate has yet permitted on this world's stage. A young man, a lover, rich, gifted, and ambitious, of social position unquestioned in South Carolina and the old Bay State—all the world loved him, as a lover; the many envied him, the upper few desired him. Handsome he has always remained.

And the world did look to him as bright as he to the world. He was in love, as he told himself, and Miss Austin was a lovable girl; and the other things he was dimly conscious of; and he had a long vacation ahead of him, and was to be married late in the autumn, and he walked up from the wharf in Newport, swinging his cane, and thinking on these pleasant things.

Newport, in those days, was not the paradise of cottages and curricles, of lawns and laces, of new New-Yorkers and Nevada miners; it was the time of big hotels and balls, of Southern planters, of Jullien's orchestras, and hotel hops; such a barbarous time as the wandering New-Yorker still may find, lingering on the simple shores of Maine, sunning in the verdant valleys of the Green Mountains; in short, it was Arcadia, not Belgravia. And you must remember that

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Pinckney, who was dressed in the latest style, wore a blue broadcloth frock-coat, cut very low and tight in the waist, with a coat-collar rolling back to reveal a vast expanse of shirt-bosom, surmounted by a cravat of awful splendor, bow-knotted and blue-fringed. His trousers were of white duck, his boots lacquered, and he carried a gold-tipped cane in his hand. So he walked up the narrow old streets from the wharf, making a sunshine in those shady places. It was the hottest hour of a midsummer afternoon; not a soul was stirring, and Pinckney was left to his own pleasant meditations.

He got up the hill and turned into the park by the old mill; over opposite was the great hotel, its piazzas deserted, silent even to the hotel band. But one flutter of a white dress he saw beneath the trees, and then it disappeared behind them, causing Pinckney to quicken his steps. He thought he knew the shape and motion, and he followed it until he came upon it suddenly, behind the trees, and it turned.

A young girl of wonderful beauty, rare, erect carriage, and eyes of a strange violet-gray, full of much meaning. This was all

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Pinckney had time to note; it was no one he had ever seen before. He had gone up like a hunter, sure of his game, and too far in it to retract. The embarrassment of the situation was such that Pinckney forgot all his cleverness of manner, and blurted out the truth like any school-boy.

"I beg pardon—I was looking for Miss Austin," said he; and he raised his hat.

A delightful smile of merriment curled the beauty's lips. "My acquaintance with Miss Austin is too slight to justify my finding her for you; but I wish you all success in your efforts," she said, and vanished, leaving the promising young lawyer to blush at his own awkwardness and wonder who she was. As she disappeared, he only saw that her hair was a lustrous coil of pale gold-brown, borne proudly.

He soon found Emily Austin, and forgot the beauty, as he gave his betrothed a kiss and saw her color heighten; and in the afternoon they took a long drive. It was only at tea, as he was sitting at table with the Austins in the long dining-room, that someone walked in like a goddess; and it was she. He asked her name; and they told him it was a

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Miss Warfield, of Baltimore, and she was engaged to a Mr. Breeze.

In the evening there was a ball; and as they were dancing (for everyone danced in those days) he saw her again, sitting alone this time and unattended. She was looking eagerly across the room, through the dancers and beyond; and in her eyes was the deepest look of sadness Pinckney had ever seen in a girl's face; a look such as he had thought no girl could feel. A moment after, and it was gone, as someone spoke to her; and Pinckney wondered if he had not been mistaken, so fleeting was it, and so strange. An acquaintance—one of those men who delight to act as brokers of acquaintances—who had noticed his gaze came up. "That is the famous Miss Mary Warfield," said he. "Shall I not introduce you?"

"No," said Pinckney; and he turned away rudely. To be rude when you like is perhaps one of the choicest prerogatives of a good social position. The acquaintance stared after him, as he went back to Miss Austin, and then went up and spoke to Miss Warfield himself. A moment after, Pinckney saw her look over at him with some interest; and he

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wondered if the man had been ass enough to tell her. Pinckney was sitting with Emily Austin; and, after another moment, he saw Miss Warfield look at her. Then her glance seemed to lose its interest; her eyelids drooped, and Pinckney could see, from her interlocutor's manner, that he was put to his trumps to keep her attention. At last he got away, awkwardly; and for many minutes the strange girl sat like a statue, her long lashes just veiling her eyes, so that Pinckney, from a distance, could not see what was in them. Suddenly the veil was drawn and her eyes shone full upon him, her look meeting his. Pinckney's glance fell, and his cheeks grew redder. Miss Warfield's face did not change, but she rose and walked, though unattended, through the centre of the ball-room to the door. Pinckney's seat was nearer it than hers; she passed him as if without seeing him, moving with unconscious grace, though it would not have been the custom at that time for a girl to cross so large a room alone. Just then someone asked Miss Austin for a dance; and Pinckney, who was growing weary of it, went out on the piazza for a cigar, and then, attracted by the beauty of the night,

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strayed farther than he knew, alone, along the cliffs above the sea.

The next day he was walking with Miss Austin, and they passed her, in her riding-habit, waiting by the mounting-stone; she bowed to Miss Austin alone, leaving him out, as it seemed to Pinckney, with exaggerated care.

"Is she not beautiful?" said Emily, ardently.

"Humph!" said Pinckney. A short time after, as they were driving on the road to the Fort, he saw her again; she was riding alone, across country, through the rocky knolls and marshy pools that form the southern part of the Rhode Island. She had no groom lagging behind, but it was not so necessary then as now; and, indeed, a groom would have had a hard time to keep up with her, as she rattled up the granite slopes and down over logs and bushes with her bright bay horse. The last Pinckney saw of her she disappeared over a rocky hill against the sky, her beautiful horse flecked with foam, quivering with happy animal life, and the girl calm as a figure carved in stone, with but the faintest touch of rose upon her face, as the pure profile

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was outlined one moment against the sunlit blue.

"How recklessly she rides!" whispered Miss Austin to him, and Pinckney said *yes*, absently, and, whipping up his horse, drove on, pretending to listen to his *fiancée's* talk. It seemed to be about dresses, and rings, and a coming visit to the B——s, at Nahant. He had never seen a girl like her before; she was a puzzle to him.

"It is a great pity she is engaged to Mr. Breeze," said Miss Austin; and Pinckney woke up with a start, for he was thinking of Miss Warfield too.

"Why?" said he.

"I don't like him," said Emily. "He isn't good enough for her."

As this is a thing that women say of all wooers after they have won, and which the winner is usually at that period the first to admit, Pinckney paid little attention to this remark. But that evening he met Miles Breeze, saw him, talked with him, and heard others talk of him. A handsome man, physically; well made, well dressed, well fed; well bred, as breeding goes in dogs or horses; a good shot, a good sportsman, yachtsman,

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story-teller; a good fellow, with a weak mouth; a man of good old Maryland blood, yet red and healthy, who had come there in his yacht and had his horses sent by sea. A well-appointed man, in short; provided amply with the conveniences of fashionable life. A man of good family, good fortune, good health, good sense, good nature, whom it were hypercritical to charge with lack of soul. "The first duty of a gentleman is to be a good animal," and Miles Breeze performed it thoroughly. Pinckney liked him, and he could have been his companion for years and still have liked him, except as a husband for Miss Warfield.

He could not but recognize his excellence as a *parti*. But the race of Joan of Arc does not mate with Bonhomme Richard, even when he owns the next farm. Pinckney used to watch the crease of Breeze's neck, above the collar, and curse.

Coming upon Miss Austin, one morning, she had said, "Come—I want to introduce you to Miss Warfield." Pinckney had demurred, and offered as an excuse that he was smoking. "Nonsense, Charles," said the girl; "I have told her you are coming."

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Pinckney threw away his cigar and followed, and the presentation was made. Miss Warfield drew herself almost unusually erect after courtesying, as if in protest at having to bow at all. She was so tall that, as Emily stood between them, he could meet Miss Warfield's iron-gray eyes above her head. It was the first time in Pinckney's life that he had consciously not known what to say.

"I was so anxious to have you meet Charles before he left," said Emily. Evidently, his *fiancée* had been expatiating upon him to this new friend, and if there is anything that puts a man in a foolish position, it is to have this sort of preamble precede an acquaintance.

"An anxiety I duly shared, Miss Warfield, I assure you," said he; which was a truth spoiled in the uttering—what the conversational Frenchman terms *banale.*

"Thank you," said Miss Warfield, very simply and tremendously effectively. Pinckney, for the second time with this young lady, felt himself a school-boy. Emily interposed some feeble commonplaces, and then, after a moment, Miss Warfield said, "I must go for my ride;" and she left, with a smile for

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Emily and the faintest possible glance for him. She went off with Breeze; and it gave Pinckney some relief to see that she seemed equally to ignore the presence of the man who was her acknowledged lover, as he trotted on a small cob beside her. That evening, when he went on the piazza after tea, he found her sitting alone, in one corner, with her hands folded; it was one peculiarity about this woman that she was never seen with work. She made no sign of recognition as he approached; but, none the less, he took the chair that was beside her and waited a moment for her to speak. "Have you found Miss Austin?" said the beauty, with the faintest trace of malice in her coldly modulated tones, not looking at him. "I am not looking for Miss Austin," said he; and she continued not looking at him, and so this strange pair sat there in the twilight, silent.

What was said between them I do not know. But in some way or other their minds met; for long after Miss Austin and her mother had returned from some call, long after they had all left him, Pinckney continued to pace up and down, restlessly, in the

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dark. Pinckney had never seen a woman like this. After all, he was very young; and he had, in his heart, supposed that the doubts and delights of his soul were peculiar to men alone. He thought all women—at all events, all young and worthy women—regarded life and its accepted forms as an accomplished fact, not to be questioned, and, indeed, too delightful to need it. The young South Carolinian, in his ambitions, in his heart-longings and heart-sickenings, in his poetry, even in his emotions, had always been lonely; so that this loneliness had grown to seem to him as merely part of the day's work. The best women, he knew, were the best house-wives; they were a rest and a benefit for the war-weary man, much as might be a pretty child, a bed of flowers, a strain of music. With Emily Austin he should find all this; and he loved her as good, pretty, amiable, perfect in her way. But now, with Miss Warfield—it had seemed that he was not even lonely.

Pinckney did not see her again for a week. When he met her, he avoided her; she certainly avoided him. Breeze, meantime, gave a dinner. He gave it on his yacht, and gave

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it to men alone. Pinckney was of the number.

The next day there was a driving party; it was to drive out of town to Purgatory, a pretty place, where there is a brook in a deep ravine with a verdant meadow-floor; and there they were to take food and drink, as is the way of humanity in pretty places. Now it so happened that the Austins, Miss Warfield, Breeze, and Pinckney were going to drive in a party, the Austins and Miss Warfield having carriages of their own; but at the last moment Breeze did not appear, and Emily Austin was incapacitated by a headache. She insisted, as is the way of loving women, that "Charles should not lose it;" for to her it was one of life's pleasures, and such pleasures satisfied her soul. (It may be that she gave more of her soul to life's duties than did Charles, and life's pleasures were thus adequate to the remainder; I do not know.) Probably Miles Breeze also had a headache; at all events, he did not, at the last moment, appear. It was supposable that he would turn up at the picnic; Mrs. Austin joined her daughter's entreaty; Miss Warfield was left unattended; in fine, Pinckney went with her.

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Miss Warfield had a solid little phaeton with two stout ponies; she drove herself. For some time they were silent; then, insensibly, Pinckney began to talk and she to answer. What they said I need not say—indeed I could not, for Pinckney was a poet, a man of rare intellect and imagination, and Miss Warfield was a woman of this world and the next; a woman who used conventions as another might use a fan, to screen her from fools; whose views were based on the ultimate. But they talked of the world, and of life in it; and when it came to an end, Pinckney noted to himself this strange thing, that they had both talked as of an intellectual problem, no longer concerning their emotions—in short, as if this life were at an end, and they two were dead people discussing it.

So they arrived at the picnic, silent; and the people assembled looked to one another and smiled, and said to one another how glum those two engaged people looked, being together, and each wanting another. Mr. Breeze had not yet come; and as the people scattered while the luncheon was being prepared, Pinckney and she wandered off like the others. They went some distance—perhaps a

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mile or more—aimlessly; and then, as they seemed to have come about to the end of the valley, Pinckney sat down upon a rock, but she did not do so, but remained standing. Hardly a word had so far been said between them; and then Pinckney looked at her and said:

"Why are you going to marry Mr. Breeze?"

"Why not?"—listlessly.

"You might as well throw yourself into the sea," said Pinckney; and he looked at the sea which lay beyond them shimmering.

"That I had not thought of," said she; and she looked at the sea herself with more interest. Pinckney drew a long breath.

"But why this man?" he said at length.

"Why that man?" said the woman; and her beautiful lip curled, with the humor of the mind, while her eyes kept still the sadness of the heart, the look that he had seen in the ball-room. "We are all poor," she added; then scornfully, "it is my duty to marry."

"But Miles Breeze?" persisted Pinckney.

The lip curled almost to a laugh. "I never met a better fellow than Miles," said she; and the thought was so like his own of the night before that Pinckney gasped for

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breath. They went back, and had chicken-croquettes and champagne, and a band that was hidden in the wood made some wild Spanish music.

Going home, a curious thing happened. They had started first, and far preceded all the others. Miss Warfield was driving; and when they were again in the main road, not more than a mile from the hotel, Pinckney saw ahead of them, coming in a light trotting buggy of the sort that one associates with the gentry who call themselves "sports," two of the gentlemen whom he had met at Breeze's dinner the night before. Whether Miss Warfield also knew them he did not know; but they had evidently had more wine than was good for them, and were driving along in a reckless manner on the wrong side of the road. The buggy was much too narrow for the two; and the one that was driving leaned out toward them with a tipsy leer. Pinckney shouted at him, but Miss Warfield drove calmly on. He was on the point of grasping the reins, but a look of hers withheld him, and he sat still, wondering; and in a moment their small front wheel had crashed through both the axles and spider-web wheels of the

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trotting buggy. The shock of the second axle whirled them round, and Pinckney fell violently against the dasher, while Miss Warfield was thrown clear of the phaeton on the outer side. But she had kept the reins, and before Pinckney could get to her she was standing at her horses' heads, patting their necks calmly, with a slight cut in her forehead where she had fallen, and only her nostril quivering like theirs, as the horses stood there trembling. The buggy was a wreck, and the horse had disappeared; and the two men, sobered by the fall, came up humbly to her to apologize. She heard them silently, with a pale face like some injured queen's; and then, bowing to them their dismissal, motioned Pinckney into the phaeton, which, though much broken, was still standing, and, getting in herself, drove slowly home.

"She might have killed herself," thought Pinckney, but he held his peace, as if it were the most natural course of action in the world. To tell the truth, under the circumstances he might have done the same alone.

Then it began. Pinckney could not keep this woman out of his head. He would think of her at all times, alone and in company.

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Her face would come to him in the loneliness of the sea, in the loneliness of crowds; the strong spirit of the morning was hers, and the sadness of the sunset and the wakeful watches of the night. Her face was in the clouds of evening, in the sea-coal fire by night; her spirit in the dreams of summer morns, in the hopeless breakers on the stormy shores, in the useless, endless effort of the sea. Her eyes made some strange shining through his dreams; and he would wake, with a cry that she was going from him, in the deepest hours of the night, as if in the dreams he had lost her, vanishing forever in the daily crowd. Then he would lie awake until morning, and all the laws of God and men would seem like cobwebs to his sorrow, and the power of it freezing in his heart. This was the ultimate nature of his being, to follow her, as drop of water blends in drop of water, as frost rends rock. Let him then follow out his law, as other beings do theirs; gravitation has no conscience; should he be weaker than a drop of water, because he was conscious, and a man?

So these early morning battles would go on, and character, training, conscience, would

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go down before the simpler force, like bonds of man's upon essential nature. Then, with the first ray of the dawn, he would think of Emily Austin, sleeping near him, perhaps dreaming of him, and his mad visions seemed to fade; and he would rise, exhausted, and wander out among the fresh fields, and green dewy lanes, and calm, contentful trees, and be glad that these things were so; yet could these not be moved, nor their destiny be changed. And as for him, what did it matter?

So the days went by. And Emily Austin looked upon him with eyes of limitless love and trust, and Pinckney did not dare to look upon himself; but his mind judged by daytime and his heart strove by night. Hardly at all had he spoken to Miss Warfield since; and no reference had ever been made between them to the accident, or to the talk between them in the valley. Only Pinckney knew that she was to be married very shortly; and he had urged Miss Austin to hasten their own wedding.

Emily went off with her mother to pay her last visit among the family, and to make her preparations; and it was deemed proper that

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at this time Pinckney should not be with her. So he stayed in Newport five long days, alone; and during this time he never spoke to Miss Warfield. I believe he tried not to look at her; she did not look at him. And on the fifth night Pinckney swore that he must speak to her once more, whatever happened.

In the morning there was talk of a sailing party; and Pinckney noted Breeze busying himself about the arrangements. He waited; and at noon Breeze came to him and said that there was a scarcity of men; would he go? Yes. They had two sail-boats, and meant to land upon Conanicut, which was then a barren island without a house, upon the southern end, where it stretches out to sea.

Pinckney did not go in the same boat with Breeze and Miss Warfield; and, landing, he spent the afternoon with others and saw nothing of her. But after dinner was over, he spoke to her, inviting her to walk; and she came, silently. A strange evening promenade that was; they took a path close on the sheer brink of the cliffs, so narrow that one must go behind the other. Pinckney

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had thought at first she might be frightened, with the rough path, and the steepness of the rocks, and the breakers churning at their base; but he saw that she was walking erect and fearlessly. Finally she motioned him to let her go ahead; and she led the way, choosing indiscriminately the straightest path, whether on the verge of the sea or leading through green meadows. A few colorless remarks were made by him, and then he saw the folly of it, and they walked in silence. After nearly an hour, she stopped.

"We must be getting back," she said.

"Yes," said he, in the same tone; and they turned, she still leading the way, while he followed silently. They were walking toward the sunset; the sun was going down in a bank of dense gray cloud, but its long, level rays came over to them, across a silent sea. She walked on, over the rugged cliff, like some siren, some genius of the place, with a sure, proud grace of step; she never looked around, and his eyes were fixed upon the black line of her figure, as it went before him, toward the gray and blood-red sunset. It seemed to him this was the last hour of his life; and even as he thought, his ankle turned, and he

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stumbled and fell, walking unwittingly into one of the chasms, where the line of the cliff turned in. He grasped a knuckle of rock, and held his fall, just on the brink of a ledge above the sea. Miss Warfield had turned quickly and seen it all; and she leaned down over the brink, with one hand around the rock and the other extended to help him, the ledge on which he lay being some six feet below. Pinckney grasped her hand and kissed it.

Her color did not change at this; but, with a strange strength in her beautiful lithe figure, she drew him up steadily, he helping partly with the other hand, until his knees rested on the path again. He stood up with some difficulty, as his ankle was badly wrenched.

"I am afraid you cannot walk," said she.

"Oh, yes," he answered; and took a few steps to show her. The pain was great; but she walked on, and he followed, as best he could, limping. She looked behind now, as if to encourage him; and he set his teeth and smiled.

"We must not be late," she said. "It is growing dark, and they will miss us."

But they did not miss them; for when they

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got to the landing-place, both the sail-boats had left the shore without them. There was nothing but the purple cloud-light left by this time; but Pinckney fancied he could see her face grow pale, for the first time that day.

"We must get home," she said, hurriedly. "Is there no boat?"

Pinckney pointed to a small dory on the beach, and then to the sea. In the east was a black bank of cloud, rifted now and then by lightning; and from it the wind came down and the white caps curled angrily toward them.

"No matter," said she; "we must go."

Pinckney found a pair of oars under the boat, and dragged it, with much labor, over the pebbles, she helping him. The beach was steep and gravelly, with short breakers rather than surf; and he got the bow well into the water and held it there.

"Get in," said he.

Miss Warfield got into the stern, and Pinckney waded out, dragging the flat-bottomed boat until it was well afloat. Then he sprang in himself, and, grasping the oars, headed the boat for the Fort point across the channel, three miles away. She sat silently in the

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stern, and it was too dark for him to see her face. He rowed savagely.

But the wind was straight ahead, and the sea increasing every moment. They were not, of course, exposed to the full swell of the ocean; but the wide sea-channel was full of short, fierce waves that struck the little skiff repeated rapid blows, and dashed the spray over both of them.

"Are you not afraid?" said he, calmly. "It is growing rougher every minute."

"Oh, no, Mr. Pinckney," said she. "Pray keep on."

Pinckney noticed a tremor of excitement in her voice; but by a flash of lightning that came just then he saw the deep eyes fixed on his, and the pure white outline of her face undisturbed. So he rowed the harder, and she took a board there was and tried to steer; and now and then, as the clouds were lit, he saw her, like a fleeting vision in the night.

But the storm grew stronger, and Pinckney knew the boat that they were in was not really moving at all, though the swash of the waves seemed to go by and the drifted spray. He tried to row harder, but with the

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pain in his ankle and the labor he was nearly exhausted, and his heart jumped in his chest at each recover. "Can you not make it?" said she, in the dark; and Pinckney vowed that he could, and set his teeth for a mighty pull. The oar broke, and the boat's head fell rapidly off in the trough of the sea. He quickly changed about his remaining oar, and with it kept the head to the wind.

"We must go back," he said, panting.

"I know," said she. The wind-storm was fairly upon them; and, in spite of all his efforts, an occasional wave would get upon the beam and spill its frothing crest into the boat. Pinckney almost doubted whether it would float until it reached the shore; but Miss Warfield did not seem in the least disturbed, and spoke without a tremor in her voice. The lightning had stopped now, and he could not see her.

He had miscalculated the force of the wind and waves, however; for in a very few minutes they were driven broadside back upon the beach, almost at the same place from which they had started. Miss Warfield sprang out quickly, and he after, just as a wave turned the dory bottom upward on the stones.

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"They will soon send for us," he said; and stepping painfully up the shore, he occupied himself with spreading her shawl in a sheltered spot for them to wait in. She sat down, and he beside her. He was very wet, and she made him put some of the shawl over himself. The quick summer storm had passed now, with only a few big drops of rain; and the moon was breaking out fitfully, through veils of driving clouds and their storm scud. By its light he looked at her, and their eyes met. Pinckney groaned aloud, and stood up. "Would that they would never come; would God that we could——"

"We cannot," said she, softly, in a voice that he had never heard from her before—a voice with tears in it; and the man threw himself down at her feet, inarticulate, maddened. Then, with a great effort at control, not touching her, but looking straight into her eyes, he said, in blunt, low speech: "Miss Warfield, I love you—do you know it?"

Her head sank slowly down; but she answered, very low, but clearly, *yes*. Then their eyes met again; and, by some common im-

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pulse, they rose and walked apart. After a few steps he stopped, being lame, and leaned against the cliff; but she went on until her dark figure was blended with the shadows of the crags.

So, when the boat came back, its sail silvered by the moonlight, they saw it, and coming down, they met again; but only as the party were landing on the beach. Several of the party had come back; and Mr. Breeze, who was among them, was full of explanation how he had missed the first boat and barely caught the second, supposing that his *fiancée* was in the first. An awkward accident, but easily explained by Pinckney, with the strain in his ankle; and, indeed, the others were too full of excuses for having forgotten them to inquire into the causes of their absence together.

Pinckney went to his room, and had a night of delirium. Toward morning his troubled wakefulness ended and he fell into a dream. He dreamed that in the centre of the world was one green bower, beneath a blossoming tree, and he and Miss Warfield were there. And the outer world was being destroyed, one sphere by fire and the other

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by flood, and there was only this bower left. But they could not stay there, or the tree would die. So they went away, he to the one side and she to the other, and the ruins of the world fell upon them, and they saw each other no more.

In the morning his delirium left him, and his will resumed its sway. He went down, and out into the green roads, and listened to the singing of the birds; and then out to the cliff-path, and there he found Miss Warfield sitting as if she knew that he would come. He watched her pure face while she spoke, and her gray eyes: the clear light of the morning was in them, and on the gleaming sea beyond.

"You must go," said she.

"Yes," he said, and that was all. He took her hand for one moment, and lifted it lightly to his lips; then he turned and took the path across the fields. When he got to the first stile he looked around. She was still sitting there, turned toward him. He lifted his hat, and held it for a second or two; then he turned the corner of the hedge and went down to the town.

Thus it happened that this story, which

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began sadly, with an epitaph, may end, thirty years earlier, with wedding-cards:

MARRIED.—*At King's Chapel, by the Rev. Dr. A——, the 21st of September, 1843, Charles Austin Pinckney to Emily, daughter of the late James Austin.*

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A FIRST LOVE-LETTER

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A FIRST LOVE-LETTER

IT was a warm day in the bush. There was no wind, and the atmosphere was in successive layers, superposed, shimmering with the heat. The canvas-topped carts of the detachment were clumped together in a circle. On three sides the level, gray-green plain, broken in its sandy sameness only by an occasional clump of sage-bush or of prickly pear, stretched as far as one could see. On the fourth side was a low, apparently insignificant, but wholly impenetrable African thicket of indefinite extent. Trackless, tangled, arid, it was fit only to be the lurking-place of hyenas and snakes, or Zulus. How much of a lurking-place it might be for the latter was a present and interesting question. Most of the company in the little camp were thinking of it. Captain Philip Haughton, in his private and particular tent, had ceased thinking about it.

There are many rapid transitions in mod-

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ern life—changes of scene and *décor*—but probably even Americans know few extremes more startling than Piccadilly and Zululand. As much as the Captain's somewhat inactive mind was occupied with anything, it was busied with this reflection. It did not particularly surprise, much less excite him, this change. The young stoic of Belgravia probably takes—he certainly affects to take—about the same interest in such changes as he does in those of scenery in a theatre; they are sometimes amusing, but more likely to be bores. However, there was uncommonly little affectation in Captain Phil's case. He had no reason whatever to regret leaving Piccadilly. It was after the season; and at such times St. James's Street was a desert hardly more frequented, and infinitely less amusing, than South Africa. The only people you saw at the clubs were men you would avoid even in South Africa. The regular round of country visits had begun; but as there was only one person whom Haughton particularly desired to meet, and she was, at the same time, one whom it was very important he should not meet—in brief, he did not much regret the loss of his various weeks

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in the shires. As for shooting, the partridges were mostly drowned, and black game scarce, he was told. And the Zulus were perhaps a more exciting and better preserved black game than either. "By Jove! I should think so," he thought, lazily, in applause of his own epigram. "Battues are nothing to it." The Captain was always ready to laugh at little or nothing. And he now smiled again, sweetly, as he reflected more precisely upon the position in which he found himself.

He was sitting upon a shawl, which he had doubled up on the sand. The shawl was in front of a tent; and the tent was in a sort of arena, surrounded by a circle of white-covered carts, their rear and open ends facing inside —some of them still filled with stores, others serving as temporary shelter. Close outside, and around them all, was a rampart of wattled underbrush. Between each two was a practicable loophole, through which was thrust a rifle; beside each rifle rested the owner, in the enjoyment of a short clay pipe. Outside, at a distance of a few hundred yards, was a circlet of pacing sentries, who marched as if they were trying to pretend it was all an unusually warm review in the Park, knowing

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their commanding officer liked style, in South Africa or elsewhere. They were fond of their commanding officer. Inside again, at the shady end of the arena (while there was a shady end), a number of long-horned, gaunt cattle were picketed; near them, the few remaining horses of the command.

Behind the Captain, in the interior of the tent, stood the Captain's servant, engaged in polishing the tops of the Captain's boots. This he did with much attention and solicitude. He knew, with all the rest of the little command—with the corporals, the lieutenants, the buglers, and almost the poor, jaded horses themselves—that the Captain and his company were in a nasty mess. And in common with the rest of them, he sometimes took the liberty of wondering how they were to get out of it; that is, supposing that they were to get out of it.

Captain Haughton, however, had got away beyond that question. It was an idle habit of his to give up problems too difficult for immediate solution. Besides, his orders left him positively no option. He was to repair to a certain position, and hold it until the main body came up, keeping the Zulus in

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check. It had been supposed that the Zulus to be kept in check numbered only a thousand or so; but the orders applied equally well to the checking of any amount of them. As his servant gave the last careful rub to the upper rim of his boots, the Captain was, in fact, thinking not at all of the Zulus, but of the last ball he had gone to in London. He remembered particularly the heat of the conservatory. The very scents and dead sweetness of the place seemed to be still in his nostrils. He could see it now —the black coats and white shoulders, the gleam of diamonds against the shiny background of green leaves. "Like the eyes of snakes in a Zulu thicket," thought the Captain; "only not so frank in their malice," he added, gloomily. Haughton was a heavy, straightforward fellow by nature; and perhaps his attempts at cynicism were clumsy.

It was hotter than ever, and there was a drowsy noise of insects in the air. The Captain's servant came forward just then with the Captain's boots. He hesitated a moment, and looked at his master, the boots in one hand. He was uneasy; he had rarely seen Captain Philip so quiet.

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"Any orders, sir?" touching his hat.

"No—or, stop—yes," said the Captain. "Ask Private Fairlie to come to me."

Saying which, the Captain leaned back as if overcome with the exertion of speaking, drew an embroidered tobacco-pouch from his pocket, and rolled a cigarette. As he looked at the tobacco-pouch, he became conscious of a tingling sensation in the bridge of his nose, which, having been very much sunburned, had begun to peel. This tobacco-pouch bore the initials *A. M.—P. H.*, and was a favorite trinket of his. Out of it, it had been his custom (being always a lazy man) to tease his fair friends into rolling cigarettes with their own white fingers.

"I am a damned fool," he remarked, with more emphasis than the occasion seemed to require. It was perfectly natural that his sunburned nose should tingle. Lighting his cigarette, he puffed a moment vigorously; but it was badly made, and the tobacco soon escaped from a seam at the side. Before he had time to roll another, a stout, blue-eyed countryman in the garb of a soldier stood before him; and the Captain became aware that Private Fairlie had saluted him, and was

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looking at him with an expression of unmistakable affection in his simple countenance.

"Private Fairlie?"

"Yes, your honor," said Fairlie, with another salute.

"You are the man whose horse was shot under him, and who rode behind me into camp from the skirmish yesterday?"

"Oh, your honor—" began Fairlie, with yet another salute; but this attempt at military discipline did not conceal a most undoubted blubber.

"There, there!" said the Captain, "enough of that. You were nearly senseless when I picked you up, and you said something about Kate. If I mistake not, that name, which I take to be feminine, was several times repeated during our ride. Now you will overlook my curiosity, but I should really like very much to know. Who is Kate?"

"Kate, your honor? Why, Kate—Kate? I don't mind telling your honor—she—your honor knows, she lives near father's farm—and she said as how she'd—leastwise, she wouldn't *then*, your honor—but she said as how she'd have me if so be as I comes back from the wars alive; and you see, your hon-

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or, when I got under that there horse, sir, it come kind of natural to think of her, and——"

"Private Fairlie, you're a fool."

"Yes, your honor."

The conversation ended, as it had begun, with a salute. The Captain rubbed his nose with his handkerchief, which caused the upper part of that organ to tingle as before. Fairlie, having no handkerchief, scraped the sand with the inner edge of his right boot. The heat was really terrific, and both men were dazzled with the glare of the white tent. There was a smell of dust and horses; the camp was so still that the cattle could be heard striking the earth at the opposite end of the arena. The Captain rose and looked through the end of his tent between two of the carts. There was a double force of sentries on duty, and they were intently watching the low edge of bush that rimmed the plain. There was nothing to show that the bush was occupied. He returned to Fairlie.

"Private Fairlie, do you suppose Kate would care if you lost your precious skin?" The Captain spoke gruffly. Fairlie stared at him stupidly. At first he seemed disposed to tears again. Finally he grinned.

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"Private Fairlie," said the Captain, more quietly, "I wish you to carry some dispatches back to Colonel Haddon at the general headquarters. You will take my horse, and start at dusk. He will carry you over the sixty miles before dawn. Of course, you must escape unseen. There is no moon, and you must be within call of the sentries at headquarters before daybreak. You will deliver the dispatches to Colonel Haddon himself. It is a chance if you get there with the dispatches; but if you do, there will be among them a letter asking for a furlough for yourself. When you have got it, you will return to England, and take a letter I shall give you to the person to whom it is addressed. Mind, you must insist on putting it into her own hands." Fairlie saluted. "When you have done this, you will go back to Derbyshire, and I strongly advise you to stay there. I will give you money to purchase your discharge. You understand?"

Private Fairlie was a stupid man; but, after some moments' hesitation, he replied, huskily, "Yes, your honor."

"Good, my man. You can go."

Fairlie touched his hat mechanically, and

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turned away. He had hardly got beyond the door of the tent when he turned, rushed back, grasped the Captain's hand, and then, with a "*Beg pardon, sir,*" strode off to his mess. Meantime the Captain, it being an hour before sunset, closed the curtain of his tent and wrote two letters. The first was brief, and has been printed in army reports and in the newspapers as the last authentic report from his command:

"CAMP DERBYSHIRE, May 20, 1879.

"SIR: I have the honor to report a large force of Zulus in the front, estimated at over four thousand. It will be impossible for us to sustain a general attack. It therefore seems advisable that we should be reënforced at the earliest possible date, or the position we now hold reoccupied with much greater force. I have the honor to be,

"Your most obedient servant,

"PHILIP HAUGHTON, Captain.

"Lieut.-Col. Haddon, C.B."

The second was longer, and has never been printed:

"To MISS ALICE MANNERS,

"Axe-edge Moor, Derbyshire, England.

"I love you, Alice, and have always loved you. I have sometimes thought you knew it. If you did not know it, I write to tell you; if you did, to forgive you.

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"O my darling! you will pardon my telling you this now, will you not? You have given me no right to send you a love-letter, dearest; but this is one: yet do not be angry until you have read it all. Let me think, now, that perhaps you love me now, and now only; and that I would kiss you if you were here. My love—darling, do not throw the letter down. I wanted to tell you that I loved you—how much, you will never know; but you might have learned from others that I loved you, and I wanted to tell you myself before I died.

"I am here at an outpost in Africa, with half a company. The orders are to hold our camp at all hazard, and we shall certainly be attacked before dawn. If I thought there was any hope of our escaping, I should not write to you thus; but you will pardon me, dear, for we cannot retreat, and there is no chance of defence or reënforcement. Indeed there is not.

"My men all know it, too; but they are very quiet. They are brave fellows, and I think they like me. Perhaps it is wrong in me to send one of them away to carry this letter to you; but he is a Derbyshire man, and was crying to-day over his sweetheart, and I could not help it. I wanted him to get home to her; and one less to be killed here makes little difference. I should like you to help him a little when he gets to England.

"I hope that you are very happy. You must forgive me for telling you. You will not think it wrong for me to write so—now?"

"Good-by, dear Alice.

"PHILIP HAUGHTON."

It was some months after the date of this letter that the guests at Carysbridge Hall,

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in Derbyshire, were awaiting dinner. It is a nuisance, waiting for dinner; particularly when you are standing before the fire, as was Major Tom Brandon, and supporting a portly person in patent-leather pumps a trifle small. Dinner was a formal affair at Carysbridge. There were many guests for the pheasant shooting, and Sir John was entertaining largely in honor of his young wife. But a man had come just before dinner, and had insisted on seeing Lady Cary personally; and she had now been gone nearly half an hour.

"I wonder who it can be?" said the Countess Dowager to Brandon. The Countess Dowager liked to know everything; that is, everything about her friends. "The servant said the man seemed to be a soldier."

"I think," said the Major, "I think Lady Cary used to have some friends in the army —when she was Miss Manners."

Further conversation was checked by Lady Cary's return. She was a beautiful woman, Sir John's wife; and she never looked better than on that night. The Major noticed that she held a letter crumpled in one hand; and her haste had given her a heightened

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color. She must have been gone over half an hour.

"Forgive me for keeping you all so long," she said, with her sweet smile. "Lord Arthur, will you take the Countess Dowager in to dinner?"

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IN A GARRET

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IN A GARRET

IT happened only last September; and I think you do not know her. I should not, but for my old Aunt Abby; but now I often look at her when I meet her in the street, in her faded black gown—is it bombazine, or is it alpaca?—that is so limp and dingy and worn-out, and looks like mourning tired with too many years' wearing. Happily her face belies its frame: she has a sweet face, still pretty, and very fresh and smooth and quiet. Aunt Abby says she is far from poor; she knows her as working in some old charities, to which she gives much money. I asked about her when I heard it, and found out more than Aunt Abby knows. Indeed, these things are not usually known; and I think I found out more than anyone knows, although this is a true story.

You see, Garden Street is not a pleasant street, and very few people know of it, and

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still fewer would ever go there; and to visit in Garden Street is more than one would do for a mere acquaintance. It was not out of any want of respect for Miss Allerton, but she was so very old that her friends were mostly infirm, or dead, or they had many descendants and engrossing family cares; and she had no relatives, or, at least, none in Boston—at all events, none near enough to expect to come in for any of her money; and mere acquaintances, as I have said, could not be expected to go to Garden Street to see her. Then, Miss Allerton had no nephews or great-nephews to keep her name before people, and no pretty-faced nieces to bring her on the scene as aunt to Juliet and a person for Romeos to conciliate. Then, she lived on Garden Street—in a court off Garden Street. Now, Garden Street is bad enough, but Garden Court is worse; for court is not a courtly name, like square or avenue. I, for one, if I die rich, expect to end my days on a boulevard, at least, as names go now in the Republic.

Thus even the mere geography of the thing was enough; for few people having due self-respect and sense of their position, social and

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geographical, in Backbavia, would care to be found north of Cambridge Street; and there were still fewer people left in society of social creation sufficiently remote to remember that they should continue to know Miss Allerton simply because she was Miss Allerton and her father had been Judge Allerton, who was the son of Harry Allerton, Governor of the King's Province of Massachusetts Bay. But charity covers a multitude of sins; a lady with a subscription-paper for soup can venture even to the end of Hanover Street, in a coupé; and that is why Miss Allerton's calls had come to be mostly associated with subscription-papers. Lady and gentlemen almoners knew that Miss Allerton was sure for twenty dollars or so, which she always paid in a roll of clean bank-bills, never by a check. Indeed, it was hard to imagine her respectable name at the foot of a national bank-check; doubtless it would have been dishonored. In fact, Miss Allerton was a very musty and obsolete old person indeed —though she still went on, like an old eight-day clock that has never been subjected to modern repairs.

The first time I went down there (*I* went

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with a subscription-paper) the venerable lady did not come to the door, and I asked the maid-servant if she were in. The servant herself, as a door-tender, showed signs of desuetude: she made one or two throaty noises, such as a mechanical toy would make if it attempted to execute a new squeak, and said that Miss Allerton was engaged. This reply seemed as difficult to her as a repartee to an echo, and the moment she had made it her skin turned browner with the blush that mantled over the enormity of the lie that she had told.

For Miss Allerton at that moment was sitting in her attic, doing nothing, and it was a falsehood most preposterous to say that she was engaged.

As I have said, the house was on a court; but at least it had the court to itself. Garden Street leaves Hutchinson Street and runs down toward the water behind the jail, through what used to be the Mill Pond, a district now filled in with the scum of humanity. After you leave Cambridge Street you go between a line of houses, ordinary enough two-and-a-half-story bricks, with the door-way in an arched cell, and often a paste-

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board placard in the window, "Rooms to Let, with Board." The basements are usually filled with shoemakers or cent-shops, and here and there a grocer with a red ticket in the window, "Ice." By and by you see that the houses are older, by the "bind" of the bricks, laying the ends and sides of the bricks alternating, and not in our monotonous modern way. The basement windows make a display of round bundles of kindling-wood and square cakes of popped corn cemented with treacle. Even these houses have seen better days. Occasionally you may note a large arched front door with a fan-light of glass over it, or the frieze of a house moulded in little wooden squares; there is an old wooden sign of a Saracen or other painted heathen perched on a bracket above a door where a negro politician keeps a pool-room. And just before you get to a corner where there is a gin-shop and a fashionable dressmaker, you turn up to the left into Garden Court, of which the wall on one side is made by a mossy wooden building skirting a discolored bit of grass, where there is an elm and a skinned and moribund sycamore. Miss Allerton's house faces upon this

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bit of grass, presenting to it a yellow façade with two gables, and only an edge to the street. The house would seem to have turned a cold shoulder to the street since it took to evil company. In the southernmost of the two gables is the garret in which Miss Allerton sat. There is a bedroom in the end toward the street; the gable does not run clear through the house, but stops and sinks down into a sloping roof with a dormer window in it. This is the garret window: it looks toward the river; and you can still see a rood or so of green water between the piles of the drawbridge and the Fitchburg Railway Station.

When the servant had shut the door in my face, I went back and told my uncle (who had sent me down with the subscription-paper) that Miss Allerton was engaged. He could not have been more surprised if I had said she was engaged to be married. He wondered who took care of the old lady now; and I asked if she lived up in that neighborhood all alone; and he said that he didn't know, but supposed she was rich enough to have some poor relation with her. I did not ask him then who she was, because I knew that

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Aunt Abby would be more likely to know; and, indeed, I was desirous of getting uptown, for I wished to get my ride that evening, and also had to go to a dinner-party.

I rode home along the quay, just before sunset; but there was no knowing the exact time, for the autumn mist was on the river, which might have been a sea for any sign that was visible of an opposite coast. A rod from the shore the smooth olive water faded to gray, and soon vanished, with no horizon-line, only the hull of a distant ship shadowed in. It was depressing; but the prospect of dinner and bright dresses was before me, and I rode the faster as the mist began to ravel out and a cold dash of rain came from the east. I even enjoyed the scene—it was such a delicious contrast to an evening of gayety—and I stopped a moment, when nearly home, to look again at the river, now ruffled by the wind that brought the rain. The same dash of rain pattered down on the roof of Miss Allerton's garret, and she sighed and turned her eyes back from the window to the littered floor and the dusty boxes. She had been doing nothing all the afternoon, and it was now nearly five.

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It was almost as unusual for Miss Allerton to be idle as it was for her to be depressed: she had lived before boredom was discovered, and was too unfashionable to have learned it since. And, although Miss Allerton was somewhat sad at heart, sitting to-day in the garret, she was not at all a querulous old lady. So far was she from being unhappy that she had sat there and forgotten to leave the place, more in wonder at her mood than because of it. She was used to taking this world cheerfully, as having a heaven-sent meaning in it. She had not felt sorrow for so many years: perhaps that was the reason of it. It had been rainy for a week, and her old servant had talked of leaving her, and one of her poor families had been found without sobriety. Not that there was very much in all this, but it troubled her a little; and then she had gone up into the garret at one, just after dinner, and had opened an old trunk to get some old dress to give away, and the idle fit had come on her, and she had stayed there ever since.

A pleasant face had Miss Allerton—a very pleasant face, with the soft gray hair and the kind wrinkles near the eyes. There was a

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spinning-wheel near her, and a row of old painted chests; fire-irons, a pompous old cane, silk-worked samplers, a rubber fire-bucket, an old wig, and doubtless many other family relics were stowed away in the boxes about her. The lozenge-shaped frame of some old dowager Allerton's hatchment was leaning with its face to the wall, falling to pieces, slowly, with the inseparable air of leisure and dignity that attaches to things which have outlived their use. Miss Allerton, too, had been thinking that she had outlived her use, and she looked vacantly at an old leather bag hanging on a nail in the wall, evidently empty. The leather bag had hung there many a year, but she had never noticed it before. Then she looked out of the little dormer window, and over to the wharves, and the factories, and the rows of wooden houses, and the dirty river slipping through its grove of piles, and all the horizon of huddled houses where she remembered green meadows and wooded hills and a blue river, when her eyes were blue, not gray, nor meant for use alone.

She paused to assure herself that she was not unhappy. Surely not—even in the gar-

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ret there, looking out on the damp, dull weather; a little lonely, that was all. And she had had so many friends! Then she remembered —what woman ever forgets?—a fair girl she had known, about the time Lafayette came to town, who was very pretty, sweetly, dearly pretty. It was odd to think this girl had been herself. There was no vanity in remembering this, for it did not seem to be herself—rather some daughter of hers who had long been dead. Only, she had never had any children. Then, her father, the judge—the proud old gentleman whom all the little provincial city had known and liked to honor—there were so few people left in the town now, although it had grown so large. Somewhat too proud indeed was he, she thought, with a sigh, in the days when the crowded wooden house was a mansion with a garden that stretched back to the square old stone houses of their friends in Bowdoin Square. After all, the time might come when she would have to leave the old house, old and unfashionable as it was, for the family fortune had grown out of fashion too, and the square brick warehouses were out of date and yielded little rent now; and she had

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never had the heart to cut down her list of charities. She had thought the fortune would outlast her time; but she had lived too long. Not that she cared much for the fortune, but her friends had often told her she must move: the street was no longer respectable. After all, though, it was not so very lonely there. She liked it better than another place. But it was a dreary September day; it was the equinoctial—there was no doubt of that; just such a day as it had been in that September in 1832 when her father, the stern old judge, had come and told her.

Yet it was strange; it still seemed as strange as it did on that first day. It had never been explained. He surely had loved her; she had thought so on that very first day of all, when the young stranger was introduced to her at her father's friend's at a tea-party. How near, too, she had been to giving up the tea-party that night! She had a headache from the ball the night before, and she was a proud young beauty, and there was going to be no one there but a new clerk of Mr. Oliver's, some young man who had come north from the Carolinas, or from some

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sugar-plantation in Barbadoes. He certainly was attracted by her that night; and he asked permission to attend her home, and her father refused it. Yes, her father had been born among the colonial aristocracy, and he was very proud.

But she had tried to make it all up, so far as she modestly could; he was not used to her father's ways, but he was a frank, ingenuous young gentleman, who had won his way with everyone. Only he had been very shy, and very much afraid of her, and very modest. It had been a twelvemonth before she had blushed when they met, so gentle had he been in his wooing, and then a year again before he dared to take her hand and look at her and leave her as he did that night of the election. And then, of course, she had supposed that he would come to see her father the next day; and every one spoke well of him by that time—every one, even her father, the old judge. But he had never come. And the next day (or was it a week after?) her father—it was just such a day as this, with the mist, and the damp, and the wind blowing the fog—her father had come home to tea, and had told her (he had said so

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casually, she remembered, in the hall, as she had been helping to divest him of his surtout)—and told her that young F—— was gone to the Californias. And that same old mail-bag had been hanging in the hall.

She had been angry at first, but she had long since given over being angry; and it was not long after that when the old judge died and left her with one brother. He had not done very well in the world; and he had died too. And many years after she saw in the newspaper that Mr. F—— had died in the Californias. (She had never mentioned the name to anyone in fifty years, nor shall I do so.) She had seen F—— once after the time he had looked in her eyes on that election-day—but only in the street, and she was in her carriage, and she was a little piqued and had feigned not to see him; and it was the day after this that her father had come home and told her, in the hall. She was wondering even then why he had not come; it was already the beginning of that long wonder that was to make a puzzle of her life—until, indeed, she grew middle-aged, and had found her work to do; and since then she had been very happy. Only she wished

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that she might have had young relations; her brother had left no children. For many years she still had thought that he would write; but he never did. Could it be that he had never loved at all? It was very strange.

Here again she paused a moment in her thinking and looked again across the river. It had not always been fretted with so many bridges. They used to have to drive many miles around to the old house at Lechmere's Point, just across the stream. She wondered if the house was still there; now there were many high blocks about it, where the orchards had been, and a dozen long black bridges stretched out and away, like the arms of the great city reaching for the woods and fields. She got up and walked to the window, with a rustle of her clean silk gown, and looked out for the view of country highlands. But the mist and fog were too thick. You never would have thought her seventy-odd as she stood there with her pleasant face and her bright eyes peering as a girl's might do for some arrival. Then she looked back into the garret with the mass of old things stored away — the outworn symbols of her quiet life. There was a lack of children's toys and

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little chairs; most of the things were very old, from the locks in the chests to the old leather mail-bag on the wall. It was all hers—hers alone. Half a thousand children passed by her windows every day, noisy, unkempt children, to a school near by, and they would look up to her windows and cry out at her. People thought she was a miser and hoarded more than memories. And the neighborhood was very sad and squalid, and people said it was not even safe for her to live there. She was very old. Had he died happily? she thought. The paper said that he had never been married. And yet he had behaved so cruelly to her. He had pleasant brown eyes, and such a brave, manly way about him! And then how tenderly he had taken the posy from her! Why was it that she thought of him to-day? And she remembered thinking, years before, that she would never have to cry again.

She felt that she was doing wrong, and tried to scold herself like a child. Wiping her old eyes with a girl's light touch to the eyes and head, she got up and went to the window again resolutely. The fog and rain were still driving from the sea. Almost in

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the zenith was a little break of pale-blue sky, so pure, so cold, that it seemed like a memory of heaven; and its color showed that it was after sunset. She heard a crash behind her; it was a startling sound in the still garret, but she turned and saw that it was only the old mail-bag fallen to the floor. It had hung upon its hook half a century, and at last the ribbon had broken with the weight.

Miss Allerton remembered it well—how it had hung upon the knob of her father's door and been carried by him to his office and back on days when foreign ships came in. It was very dusty, but she stooped to pick it up, and her hand slipped in through the leathern lips and drew forth a letter. It was a letter that had never been opened. It must have stuck in a wrinkle in the bottom of the bag and lain there all these years. It was too dark in the old garret to see more than that it was folded over and sealed with a great, careless seal, without a stamp. It was evidently written before the days of stamps. She walked with it to the window: the little square of blue sky had grown larger, and gave just light enough for her old eyes to read the address—to her—to Mistress Sarah Allerton.

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It was a boyish, trembling handwriting, but the sight of it set her heart beating as it might have done a girl's. She steadied herself on the window-sill a minute before she broke the seal. The letter ran as follows:

"Sept. the 8th, 1832.

"DEAR MADAM,—If I dare to write to you to ask your leave to lay my addresses before your respected father, it is only that I feel last night that you learned my secret. I am too unworthy of you not to deem this letter presumptuous: forgive me, dear Miss Allerton, if you cannot return my love. If you smile when next we meet, I will take it that you are not angry with me, although you cannot deign to love me. For I have loved you since that day we met two years ago. But if you can neither love nor pardon me, make no answer to this note, and I shall know.

"F——.

"Dearest, I do love you so!"

Miss Allerton dropped the letter from her hands and looked outward at the sky. The rain was driving now, washing the heavens clear; and the rain came also from her eyes, and tears unwonted fell upon the dusty garret floor. But he had loved her: that was all. A last time she looked over the old river: the clear rift of blue was wider now, and the curtain of rain swept back across the bay, from

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where the long gray cloud-bank rose away from the clear horizon. The autumn storm was over, and under its clear blue rim there came the winter.

But I think of late Miss Allerton has been happier and less lonely than of old. And I do assure you she is a very dear old lady, young-looking for her years.

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A DAUGHTER OF SPAIN

(*Los Caraqueños*)

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almost the last of the old Spanish nobility of Carácas.

There are two things in the little city of Carácas that go back to the time when the Spanish empire made a simulacrum of the Roman round the world—one is the great round-arched Spanish bridge, spanning the deep arroyo on the mountain-slope above the present town—useless now, for the earthquake clefts are deeper on either side than this gorge of the ancient river of the city, and have drained its stream away; and the other the house still called La casa del Rey—a great stone fortress in the centre of the present town, with walls eight feet thick, its windows like tunnels cut through to the iron unglazed casement—for this was the only house that was left standing on the evening of the great earthquake. The modern city clusters timidly about it, its houses a modest one or double-story, and, on the clay slope where the older city was, the cactus grows, and the zenith sun burns the clay banks red, and the old "gold-dust road," over the Cordillera to the sea, now but a mule-path of scattered cobble-stone, winds lonely and narrow across the splendid bridge, among the great fissures

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that the earthquake left. Both bridge and house still bear the sculptured blazonry, the lions and the castles, and the pious inscription to the greater glory of the Virgin. And in this house for fifty years she lived, Dolores, married to the Marquis del Torre, called by the people the lonely lady of the Royal House; a loving woman, a maiden wife, a faithful widow to the hero whom she loved.

Carácas lies in a plain, like the Vega of Granada, only green with palms as well as poplars; but through its rich meadows a turbid mountain torrent runs, and south, and west, and east are mountains; and north the mighty Silla lifts almost to the snows, half breaking the ceaseless East wind of the sea; trade-wind, it has been called in history; slave-wind were better. And by the little city is the palm-clad Calvareo, the little hill gay with orchids and shaded by tree-ferns, in whose pleasant paths the city people still take their pleasure (for the name of Calvary but means the view, not any sadness), and took their pleasure, eighty years since, when this story begins. And one evening, in the early years of the century, there walked, with

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but a nurse for her duena, a girl whose beauty still smiles down through sad tradition and through evil story, to lighten the dark streets whose stones for many years her feet have ceased to press. And the memory of the old Casa Rey, the castle, all is hers; and the people of the old Spanish town have a tale how her face is still seen at the window; at the grated window in the round tower of the corner, that projects over and commands the two streets. For there, in life, her sweet, pale face used to show itself, between the bars, and watch for the cavalry her noble husband led, returning from the wars. Those were the wars of liberation, when freedom was fought for, not possession and estates; and the Marquis Sebastian Ruy del Torre led in all. And days and days she would watch for him returning, after battles won, she sitting with her golden needle-work at the corner window, her night-black hair against the iron bar, her strange blue eyes still watching down the street. So she sat there, and broidered chasuble or altar-cloth for the holy church of Santa Maria de las Mercedes, where she prayed each dawn and evening, yet cast her eyes down either street between each stitch, to watch the

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coming of him she loved on earth. And the people of Carácas used to gather her glances to their hearts, like blue flowers, for of herself they saw no more than this.

But her husband, from their wedding-day, had never seen her. When the distant trumpet sounded, or the first gold-and-scarlet pennon fluttered far down the street, she would drop her work and rise. And then she would wave her hand, and her husband would wave his hand, at the head of his column far away. This was for the populace. But then she would go from the window; and be seen there no more while he stayed at Carácas. . . . But those that were beneath the window used to say (for the husband was too far off then to see) that before she left the window, she would cast a long look down the street to that distance where he rode, and those that saw this glance say that for sweetness no eye of mortal saw its equal, and the story is, it made little children smile, and turned old bad men good, and even women loved her face.

Then she vanished from the tower, and they saw her no more. During all the time that might be the Marquis's stay, no more she

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came to the window, no more to the door. State dinners were given there in the King's house; banquets, ay, and balls, where all that was Castilian in Carácas came; but the custom was well known, and no one marvelled that the châtelaine came not to meet them; the lovely Lady Dolores, whom no one ever spoke to or saw. Some dueña, some relation, some young niece or noble lady, cousin of either the del Torre, was there and did the honors. And of the Marquesa no one ever spoke, for it was understood that, though not in a convent, she was no longer in the world —even to her husband, it was said, at first with bated breath, then openly.

For the servants told, and the family, and it was now no secret how, days and weeks before her lord returned the lady would busy herself with preparations. And their state suite of rooms, and their nuptial-chamber (into which, alas! she else had never come!) were prepared by her, and made bright and joyous with rich flowers, and sweet to his heart by the knowledge of her presence, and the touch of her dear hand. Then, when all was done, and one white rose from her bosom in a single vase (and in a score of years this white

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rose never failed), she darkened the rooms and left them for his coming, and went back to her seat in the stone-floored tower room, and sat there with her gold and silver embroidery, and so watched for him. And while he stayed in the city, she lived in these cold, bare rooms; for they alone had not been changed when they were married, but had been kept as they had been, a prison, and my lady Dolores loved them best; but she came not now to the window—lest their eyes might meet.

During his life, she never spoke to him; after he was killed in battle, she lived on alone. Now she no longer worked at the window, and she came there but rarely. It seemed she came there for compassion, that the people, whom she felt so loving, might see her smile. For her smile was sweet as ever, only now it bore the peace of heaven, not the yearning love of earth. Yet never went she out her doors. And when she died—it is only some years since—they buried her upon Good Friday, and she sleeps in her own church, beneath the great gold shrine she loved and wrought for, of Mary, Mother of the Pities. And all the people of the city

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saw her funeral; and there is, in the church, a picture of the Virgin, that is really of her, painted by a dying artist that had seen her face at the window many years before.

And did they not, the Caraqueños, wonder and ask the cause of this?—What was it?—They do not know—but did they not ask the story of the lonely lady, so well known to them?—They asked many years since; but soon gave over; partly that the secret was impenetrable, partly for love of her. For they had, the poorest peasant of them, that quick sympathy to stanch heart's wounds that all the conventions of the strenuous North must lack. God gives in all things compensation; and even sins, that are not mean or selfish, have their half atoning virtues. Their silence was soothing to her sorrow; they never knew. But the priest?—The Church of Rome is cruel, but it keeps its secrets. And only it and Heaven knew that their lives were one long agony of misguidance, as many lives must be on earth—perhaps sometimes the priest-confessor may help in such affairs; if so, God speed the Jesuits. But one thing is sure: in all their lives, after their marriage ceremony, they never met. She died old, in

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gentle silence, he still young, upon a bloody field; and now their eyes at last met in Heaven; there first, they understood.

II

So we may, harmless, venture to tell what the people of Carácas now say—with reverent memory, and loving glances at the old stone house. The hearts that inhabited it are cold; but its Spanish arms above the door still last, clear-cut as on the day the pride of this world's life first bade the owner place them there. Yet it is not the heraldry that makes, after so many years, the old Spaniard of Carácas still point out the house, and young men and maidens like to make trysting-places of its gardens, which are public and where the band plays evenings—if that can be called trysting to our northern notions, which is but a stolen mutual glance in passing. But hearts are warm in Catholic Spain, and they dare not more; right hard they throb and burn for just so much as this—ay, and break for the lack of it.

In the Calvareo that evening, the tale begins: when Dolores de Luna, then but a

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lovely girl, was walking with only old Jacinta, the black nurse. Black she was called, but her hair alone was black—blue-black; her face was of that fiery brown that marks the Venezuelan Indian; she was not fat, as most nurses, but stood erect, with fierce lurid eyes, her hair in two tight braids, and was following and watching her gentle charge. Her race has nothing of the merry sloth, the gross animality of the negro; what things Jacinta found to do, were done. She was scarce a dozen years older than her mistress, and her form was still as lithe, her step as firm and quick as that of that boy of hers, now twelve, in the military school, training under the *soutane*'d Jesuits for the service of the Church—or Bolivar. And in the Calvareo also that evening were two men, the General and his nephew Ramon del Torre, both cousins of Dolores; not, of course, walking with her or speaking to her, save by reverent bows or, on the nephew's part at least, by looks of fire. Yet the uncle might, perhaps, have walked with her, even in Carácas; for he, whom men called the General, despite his prouder titles, was not her cousin only, but her guardian. And he had come back to see her.

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Dolores and her maid had traversed the spiral path to the summit of the little hill; there is a little pool and fountain that the Moors, generations back, had taught these people's ancestors to build; and from a bench among the orchids and the jasmine, and the charming amaryllis lily, standing sentry by her, like a band of spearmen, she saw the lovely valley, purple in the first shadows of the short tropic day, and, on the southern mountain, the walls of the Archbishop's new convent; to the north, and higher, the mountain fort guarding the road to the coast. As she looked, it dipped its colors to the sunset, colors which were the yellow and red—the blood and gold—of Spain, and the booming of its little cannon echoed down the valley. Then, as the Angelus replied, she turned, and touched, tenderly, a marvellous lonely flower that bloomed beside her. It was the Eucharis Amazonica, the lily of the Amazon, but known to her only as the *Flor del Espiritu Santo*—the flower of the Holy Ghost. One moment, it seemed that she would be disturbed. The younger man had left the older on his walk—for uncle and nephew had little in common—and although

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gossip had made him suitor for his cousin's hand, he stood a moment watching her, behind a group of tree-ferns. A man would give his fortune for such a girl, he thought, and she was the greatest heiress on all the Spanish Main.

He might have stepped forward, into the open, to her, and no one but Jacinta would have known. Perhaps he was about to do so; but suddenly there appeared, on the hill-top beside them, a tall figure dressed in a purple gown, with hood and trimmings of bright scarlet, looking like a fuchsia flower; on his head was a little black velvet covering shaped half like a crown. It was the young Jesuit, the Archbishop of the Guianas. Dolores rose and kissed his hand, bending the knee respectfully; he sat down beside her.

For Dolores was Condesa de Luna, the orphan daughter of dead parents who represented both branches of a famous old Gothic family; her prairies stretched from the ocean to the Apure, her herds so countless that they roamed wild upon pampas which were hers, hunted by peons who were hers. The old stone castle with the Spanish arms was hers, and another like it stood empty for her in far

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Madrid. Her guardian, the Marquis del Torre, was a poor man beside her; and his nephew, Don Ramon, poorer still. Her bringing up befitted her station. At five she rose, and went, with Jacinta, to early mass—nearly always to a different church, as is the seemly custom in Carácas, lest young men should take advantage of it and find place behind the chairs of their adored ones, where they could not be repelled: for, of course, no young gentleman, however madly in love, would insult his lady by accosting her in the open street. After mass, at six, being the time of sunrise and by comparison safe, Jacinta would take her charge for a walk, usually on the Calvareo, then deserted. At seven they would be home, and then in the great court-yard, under the palms and rose-red orchids, Dolores would take her lessons—French, English, music—all from priests. So she passed her days, all in the half-light of the great court-yard; only toward sunset again would she see the open sky, driving with one of her two governesses in the state carriage down the broad valley to where the wheel road stopped, and back again; or more rarely, as on this night, venturing on another

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walk. And all the youth of Carácas would gaze after her carriage; the young men driving out too, by themselves, in carriages, who had passed their days more in gambling or cock-fighting than with books and music; never, indeed, at mass. For here the lords of creation vent their authority in ordaining their wives and sisters to the Church and goodness, themselves to evil. But the most hardened duellist among them could no more than look at Dolores; only her reckless cousin Ramon would venture to ride athwart her carriage, and presume upon his cousinship to bow.

Yet intercourse is possible always betwixt young people who seek each other out; and all Carácas gave Ramon to her for her suitor. And to-night even, as he stood and glowered at the Archbishop from behind the tree-ferns, he had another chance. For there is, and was, one more strange custom in this strange city; at the sunset hour the young ladies of Carácas, all in their gayest dresses, sit in the great open windows and look upon the street —a curious sight it is to see the bright eyes and white throats thrust, as birds look from a cage, through the iron bars of the sombre

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stone windows. (For no wind or cold ever needs a window of glass in that perpetual perfect weather; the high sun never makes a shutter needful in the narrow streets.) And there they sit, unoccupied; and the young men of the city, dressed also in their best, walk by as slowly, and look as lingeringly, as they dare; and perhaps, if the dark shadow of mamma or the dueña does not come out too quickly from the inner room, a few quick words are spoken, and a flower left or given. And what says the old proverb of the Carabaqueños?

"*Better two words in secret than a thousand openly.*"

III

Ramon's uncle, Sebastian Ruy, Marques del Torre, had been as a young nobleman of oldest lineage should be, or should have been, in that early eighteenth century that still lingered to the nineteenth in the Andes. But this took him to Madrid and to Paris in the years VII. and VIII.; and the eighteenth century, as one knows, ended in those wee small numbers. Torre came back to plunge his country in a revolution which lasted in-

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termittently, like one of its own volcanoes, for more than twenty years. The young Parisian étudiant began his first émeute in Carácas itself, with a barricade after the orthodox fashion of the years I. and II. This being quickly suppressed—partly that there were no pavements, and partly that each house was an impregnable fortress—but mostly that the city was of the governing class and stood with Spain—Torre had had to leave the capital for the pampas, where, for over twelve years, he maintained discursive warfare with a changeable command of Indians and peons, which, however, on the whole, increased in numbers, officered by a few young gentlemen, under himself. His marquisate he forgot, and sought to make others forget it. He was, throughout Venezuela, The General. He had never been back within the walls of Carácas; and, at nearly forty, he learned of his only aunt's death following his uncle's, and of the little girl they left, and of his guardianship.

A little girl she had appeared to his imagination on the pampas; when, in an interval of truce, he had come to Carácas, she seemed a young woman. The General's locks were

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already grizzled and his face weather-beaten with ten years' open life on the plains; his face was marked, close beside the eye, with the scar of a sabre. He had then but one interview with Dolores; saw her nurse, her instructors, her father confessor; heard stories about his nephew Don Ramon, which troubled him; went back to camp.

Then intervened a brief campaign in the mountains of the Isla Margarita; Torre went there to take command. This is the famed old island of pearls; they lie there in the reefs amid the bones of men and ships. Torre found no pearls, but he defeated the royal troops in the first engagement resembling an open battle he had ventured to fight. This matter settled, he lay awake at night, and thought about his new ward. Further tidings reached him from Carácas of his nephew. It was said young Ramon boasted he would marry her. Then the King, as is the royal way after defeat in battle, made further concessions to the "Liberals," as the revolutionists were called; and in the coaxing amity of the moment, Torre was permitted, nay, invited, to return to the capital. He did so, and was immediately given a banquet

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by the royal Governor, and a ball at which his ward Dolores was present. The royal Governor and his lady sat beneath a pavilion, webbed of the scarlet and gold of Spain. By their side sat Sebastian Torre, now called the Victor of Margarita, Commandant of the Isle of Pearls. The Countess Dolores came and courtesied deeply to them; then she rose the taller for it, and as she turned haughtily away they saw that she was almost robed in pearls; three strands about her neck and six about her waist; and the ribbon in her mantilla was pale green, white, and red. El Gobernador only smiled at this, the liberal tricolor, and made a pretty speech about it; but the vice-regal lady made some ill-natured reference to the pearls, as spoils from Margarita. Don Ramon was standing by and heard it. The General did not look at the pearls.

After the formal dance the General went up to compliment his ward. This was the first time he had seen her since his return; for even he could not call save in the presence of the family; and she had no other family than himself. He could not call on her until—unless—he married her. He said, "I am glad my lady Countess is kinder to

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our colors than my nephew." He watched her as he said this; she started, and at the end of the sentence blushed. He saw her blush, and misconstrued it. Then he bowed, as if to retire.

"The pearls," she said, hastily, "they are all I have; see!" And the Marquis, bowing, saw they formed not only a necklace, but, after passing thrice around her neck, descended to be lost in the laces of her dress.

The Marquis ended his bow, and went back to camp. Next week there came an Indian soldier to Dolores with a box of island pearls; they were large as grape-shot, and went thrice about her waist. But the General no longer contradicted her engagement to his nephew.

For the General had never known women; he had only known what men (and women, too) will say of women. At Paris, and Madrid, he had seen his friends see dancers, figurantes; he did not confound other women with these, but he had known none other. Of girls, in particular, he was ignorant. A man of Latin race never knows a girl; in America, North America, it is different, and one sometimes wonders if we justify it.

Some weeks after the General got back to

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his camp (which was high up amid the huge mountain, the first mainland that Columbus saw, which fends the Gulf of Paria from the sea), he was astounded by the appearance of no less a person than his nephew Ramon. He had broken with the royal cause, he said, and come to seek service beneath his uncle. He did not say what statement he had left behind him in Carácas—no explanation was necessary in the then Venezuela for joining any war—but how he had justified his delaying his coming nuptials with Dolores. For he loved her, this young fellow; yet he said —allowed it to be said—that in the process *de se ranger*, in the process of arrangement, for his bride, that she might find her place unoccupied, certain other arrangements had been necessary which took time.

He did not tell this story to his uncle, who took him and sought to make a soldier of him. Not this story; but he told him that he loved Dolores; and his uncle—was Ramon not twenty years younger? — believed him. Twenty years, or fifteen; 'tis little difference when you pass the decade.

But the General found him hard material to make a soldier of. He was ready enough

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at a private brawl; ready enough, if the humor struck him, to go at the enemy; but could not lead his men there. And his men were readier to gamble with him than to follow him; though brave enough, in a way.

Yet the General Marquis blinded his faults —ay, and paid his debts—for when he lost at "pharaon" a certain pearl he wore, the uncle bought it back for him, with a caution to risk his money, not his honor; at which the young captain grit his teeth, and would have challenged any but a creditor. And when a certain girl, a Spanish woman, followed him to camp, del Torre knew of it, and helped Ramon to bid her go; and if the General thought the worse of him, he did not think Dolores loved him less; for was not Sebastian himself brought up on that cruel half-truth which some women still do their sex the harm to make a whole one? that women love a rake reformed. Then came a battle, and both were wounded, and more concessions from his Catholic Majesty; and in their wake the wounded gentlemen went back to Carácas.

The General's hair was grayer, and in that stay again he saw Dolores only once, and

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that was in church. At mass, high mass, *Te Deum*, for the Catholic Majesty's concessions, Don Ramon stood behind her chair; and del Torre saw them from a pillar opposite, and again the girl-countess blushed. And after mass the new Archbishop met him in the street and talked—of him, and of his ward, and of Don Ramon.

"He is a graceless reprobate," said this peon-priest.

The Marquis sighed. "A soldier—for a brave man there is always hope."

The Archbishop eyed him.

"She loves him?"

"She loves him."

"He is poor!"

"She is rich."

"You should marry her," said the Archbishop, and shrugged his shoulders.

A week after he met them all again; and this was that evening in the garden.

IV

Now, this arch-priest had been a peon, and a soldier in del Torre's army; and then he had left it, and had seen the Viceroy and

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been traitor to the rebels, and so, for safety became a priest; and then, heaven and the vice-queen knew how, bishop; and but that his archiepiscopal credentials were now fresh from Rome, del Torre, still a Catholic, had called him traitor! Del Torre could not like the man, though he stood between him and God; and he knew that disliking must be mutual; and he marvelled, simple soldier! that the intoxicating message came from him. But he put this cup of heaven from his lips.

For del Torre, from his fierce August of war, had learned to love this April maiden with all his heart, and with all his life and his strong soul. Were not his hairs gray, and his face so worn and weather-beaten? And his heart—he had none fit for this lady of the light. Enough that it was his pearls that clasped her slender waist.

The Archbishop, too, had seen his gray hairs; yet he thought that it was best. He had said so. Perhaps he wanted her possessions for the Church. His nephew Don Ramon cursed the Archbishop for sitting there that night, and saying to her—what? Novitiate and convent, perhaps, or his own sins. For the lady Dolores was devout as

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only girls can be who have warm hearts and noble souls, and are brought up in cloisters.

Del Torre stood on the other side of the Calvary hill, where the sunset lay, and looked at it, dimly—for his heart was breaking; the Archbishop kept close his converse with Dolores; perhaps he saw her fiery younger lover lurking in the branches. She rose—she and Jacinta—and the priest walked home with them. He talked to her of nephew Ramon and his crimes—not his sins with women, for the priest, too, was a crafty man, and did her sex no honor—but of his gambling, his brawling, his unsaintliness. He said Ramon was a coward; and when Dolores's pale cheek reddened, he marked it again; and when she demurred at this, he told her a trumped-up story of Ramon's last battle under his grave uncle. For Dolores, noble maiden, had not yet confessed her life's love to herself—how then to her confessor?

The Archbishop walked slowly home with her, Jacinta just behind, and left her under that old stone scutcheon on the door. Del Torre and Don Ramon lingered behind; and when they had passed her window, she was sitting there, looking weary. Then came the

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nephew's chance. The old General passed by, sweeping off his hat, his eyes on the ground. He had been talking to the youth of all the duties of his life and love; but Ramon was inattentive, watching for her. As they passed her window Ramon lingered, daring a word to Dolores through the iron bars. He asked her for a rose she wore. She looked at him a moment, then gave it to him, with a message: *it is for the General.* The General saw her give the rose; he did not hear the message. Don Ramon did; and his face turned the color of a winter leaf. As he walked on, he crushed the rose, then threw it in the gutter. For the girl, womanlike, had told the rival, not the one she chose.

That night Ramon intoxicated himself in some tavern brawl. He had a companion with him, not of his own sex; and when another officer reproached him with it, for his cousin, he swore that he would marry her, and that she had been—— Then they fought a duel, and both were wounded.

The General heard of it the next morning, and it was even the Archbishop brought him the news. The priest besought del Torre to marry his ward, but he was obdurate; the

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crafty priest wrestled with the soldier's will all through that day, and neither conquered. But the General's face looked worn; he argued, only sadly, of the hot blood of youth, of the hope in her love for the nephew, and of his bravery. Then to them, late in the day came the young officer, wounded, the bandage on his breast half stanching the heart's blood he had shed for her, and besought the general not to give her to Don Ramon. Del Torre stood as if at bay. "You love her too?" he cried.

"Ay, and would save her," said the young man, faintly.

"You must protect her from this libertine," then said the priest. For he wished her to marry the one he thought she loved not.

"She loves him!" sighed the General.

"You must save her——"

"I will live with her, and guard her as my own——"

"You may not," said the priest.

"I am her guardian——"

"You may not—you must marry her."

"I am old and she is young——"

"The holy Church demands it!"

"I love her not—I——" the lie stuck in his lips.

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Late in the afternoon del Torre went to see Dolores. She was at vesper service, and he waited until she came back, pale. He began to speak. "I have heard all," she interrupted; "Jacinta told me." And again he saw her blush.

Del Torre groaned; he turned aside. Then he strode back to her, his sabre clanking as he walked. "God forgive me if I err. Dolores, you may not marry this man—you—you must—Señorita Condesa, will you marry me?"

Dolores looked up; she had been red, she was now pale. So blushes lie.

"The Church—the Archbishop—demand it," del Torre hurried on, not looking at her, for he heard her exclamation. "I love you—well enough—to wed you." The soldier's voice broke, too feeble now to cry a charge. He never saw her look at him. God pardon him for looking down.

"You love me—well enough to wed me ——" She had turned red again, and her voice was low. He looked, and saw it.

"I will keep you, and watch over you, Dolores, with my life. The Church demands it—I am but a soldier—will you marry me?"

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Her dark head was bowed, and the purple of her eyes he saw not.

"Yes," she said; but oh, so gravely—so coldly, as he thought!

He bowed ceremoniously, and touched her hand to his lips; then he turned and left the stone-walled tropic garden. And as his sabre clanked in the passage-way, she threw herself on the hammock in a flood of tears.

And that is how they were affianced.

V

THE love of a man for a girl is perhaps different from any other passion our souls on earth are tempered with. Daphnis and Chloe are pretty, natural, charming to paint and write *vers de société* about; but so simple as to be shallow, so natural as to be replaceable. To Daphnis, we know that any other Chloe will be Chloe too. And they are in reality selfish; they seek the consummation of their wishes: he his, she hers. It may be the same human energy; but in the fierce, almost blasphemous, self-abnegation of the man's love, it seems as different a manifestation as the earth-rending power of freezing water

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from the swelling of a bud at spring. The man can renounce his love; but he desires her well-being with a will to which murder is an incident and the will divine but an obstacle to be overcome.

The Archbishop had told del Torre that his nephew had been married already—secretly, but married—married to the woman who came to seek him out at the camp. Against this wall del Torre's will had been beating in vain before his own betrothal to Dolores was announced. If she *could* not marry Ramon, it might, indeed, be best she married him. But it was with a fierce suspicion he received his friends' congratulations at his club and camp. Among his officers no other look or accent mingled with an unaffected joy. But in the city, he fancied —he was ever ready to fancy—among the young men, a shade of irony in their congratulations on his happiness. Was he not so old!

Don Ramon heard of it from Jacinta. Jacinta was on the side of the younger man. She looked upon del Torre's gray hairs with fierce eyes. Ramon's liquid voice and peachy lip had fascinated this supple creature of the

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forest. Don Ramon heard; and his own answer was characteristic.

"The old fool!"

Jacinta nodded impatiently. She asked him for a message back. He took pen and paper and wrote:

"SEÑORITA CONDESA: Thou lovest me. On the morning thou shalt wed Don Sebastian I kill him.

"RAMON DEL TORRE."

He read it over; then he stopped and thought. His first impulse was to boast; his second, to intrigue. He was not all tiger; something of the serpent lay within the handsome youth.

"I will send it this evening." he said to Jacinta. And in the evening this is what he wrote:

"SEÑORITA CONDESA: The Archbishop is my enemy and makes my uncle marry you. Have you confessed to him? Surely, you have loved me? On the day he marries you he shall kill your

"RAMON."

This letter he sent. So he played upon the poor girl's conscience, because as a child she had given him a smile; and bragged even

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to her that he had had her heart. This was Thursday, March 19, 1812. The marriage was set for the 26th. Ramon went to the club, the café which served as club to the aristocracy of Carácas, and announced publicly that his uncle was forcing his ward to marry him against her will. The General, when this story was brought to him, winced, but only replied: "My nephew knows I cannot fight him; I must leave my honor to the kind opinion of my friends." This speech was repeated — "to the kindness of my friends:" and that night a dozen young gentlemen called upon the marquis and asked to be permitted to provoke Don Ramon. The General refused it to all, with one wave of his hand. "I marry my ward for family reasons; my nephew must be permitted to make what criticism he chooses."

Don Ramon then announced his uncle a coward, and promised to prevent the marriage by force. Del Torre took no notice. Jacinta had taken the letter to Dolores, but Ramon got no reply. After his last threat, however, he received a call from a Jesuit priest, who was sent by the Archbishop and hinted of the Inquisition. Then the young

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man was silent for two days, and in devouring his rage he produced this letter to Dolores:

"DOLORES: Hast thou confessed? And why no answer to me?

"For death (*para la muerte*),

"RAMON."

To this Jacinta brought back a line:

"I shall confess upon my wedding-day. My answer to my husband, with the message that your Honour" (*V.*, only, in the Spanish) "did not give.

"DOLORES, CONDESA DE LUNA."

For she now guessed that Ramon had never given the message that went with her rose.

All this was in Holy Week. Palm Sunday passed; the Wednesday came; Holy Thursday was the day fixed for the wedding—by the Archbishop's special will.

Now, it must be remembered that in all this time del Torre had spoken with Dolores face to face three times, and three times only. Each time he had seen her, he had mentioned his nephew's name; and each time she had changed color. He would have married her to Don Ramon could he have done

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so; even now he had dared but for Ramon's own conduct. But all this time del Torre was in an agony of doubt, through which even Ramon's insults could not penetrate. He would have sent Dolores to a convent, but the Archbishop forbade it; the priest feared not Don Ramon against Don Sebastian; perhaps, however, he feared him at the convent doors. But all this time del Torre had seen Dolores twice a day, at mass, where he went and gazed upon her, dim through incense.

On Wednesday morning the Marquis del Torre had a last interview with his bride. She was to go to her last maidenly confession on that day; and he called early in the morning, in his uniform as General of the Liberal army. When he came upon her she was all in white and girt about with pearls. Pearls were in her dark hair, pearls in the folds of her white dress, pearls in her neck, no other color about her save the magic amethystine of her eyes. Her face was pale.

Del Torre bowed over her hand, then stood beside her. After the greeting, he said:

"Señorita Dolores, I am still your guardian —I would only marry you to make you happy.

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Do you think I can?" His lips were paler than hers, and his voice sounded cold. She only answered:

"Quite sure, señor."

"And the rose I saw you give my nephew —is it dead?"

Again the rush of color to her face; but, after a start, she answered, "It is dead." She stammered slightly, trying to say more; to relieve her embarrassment he rose and left her. "Hasta mañana!"

"Mañana por la mañana," she answered, forcing brightness in her voice. The marquis went out into the sunlight; he felt his heart as cold as hers.

But again Dolores burst into tears; then, quickly drying them, she wrote a letter and sealed it. Then she called Jacinta.

The Indian nurse came quickly, and as she stood looking at Dolores a dog's love was in her eyes; but not a dog's true faith. "This letter—the marquis must have it in the morning," said the countess.

"He shall have it—in the morning," answered Jacinta. Then Dolores went to her confessor. And Jacinta could not read the letter; so she took it to Don Ramon first, and

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asked him what it was. And it was Don Ramon read it, Jacinta looking on.

Then Ramon girt his sword about him, and went to mass.

The soldiers in Carácas march to mass and the service is performed at beat of drum. At the muffled tap of a march the regiment files in to fill the nave, and kneels, ringing their bayonets upon the stones; the people fill the sides, and stand behind the columns on the aisles. The General was there, as usual, but he could not see Dolores; she was kneeling at a shrine upon one side, a shrine of Mary, Mother of Pity. All the pictures and gold images were heavily draped in crape, for it was Holy Week. The brazen trumpets of the military band sounded through the Kyrie Eleison; the church was dark, for every woman was in black until Good Friday, and the crape hangings shrouded close the walls. Del Torre stood erect in his green uniform, but, save for his figure, the nave was a mass of red and gold and glittering steel. He looked for her; he looked back to the doors which were thrown back inward; from the dark, shrouded church he looked through into the empty square, blazing with the zenith

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sun of the equinox. Again a muffled drum-beat, and the regiment knelt, with a rattle of their bayonets, upon the stones; it was the elevation of the host, and he, too, knelt and crossed himself.

When mass was over, the soldiers filed out first; as del Torre followed, he met the wounded captain again, with bloodless cheeks. "You are too pale to be out, sir," said the General, almost lovingly, his hand resting lightly on the other's shoulder.

"Don Ramon is outside," he answered.

"I have no fear—the youth is mad," said del Torre.

It is the custom in Spanish America, now forgotten in old Spain, to lead the holy images of the church about the streets, with a slow processional, before Good Friday. As del Torre spoke, they found themselves behind one of these. In this Church of Santa Teresia is a famed old image of Christ bearing the Cross, brought two centuries before from Spain. It is especially venerated by the merchants of Carácas; large sums are subscribed by them each Easter time to dress it up, thousands of dollars and doubloons. Behind this image now they found themselves.

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Eight chanting priests in mourning black and lilac, bore it on either side, but the image was gay with beaten gold, borne in a canopy of costly lace, a hundred tall wax candles giving light. The priests move very slowly, scarce a step a minute, making stations at each shrine, so that to bear these images from one church to another may take half a day. Del Torre and the wounded officer could not, of course, pass it; so that it was half an hour when they reached the open air, and the square nearly emptied of the worshippers; del Torre heard the distant band of the army down the mountain slope.

As they came out into the heat, he felt a slight shudder, like a quiver of the earth, and thought it was the shock of seeing his nephew. Don Ramon del Torre spoke loudly, disregarding the presence of the bystanders, pressing rudely by the sacred shrine, and crying that the old man would not fight.

"There stands the old man that will wed my cousin."

"Mention not her name," said General del Torre——

"I would kill him first, but that his old blood dare not spill itself for her."

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"Mention not her name," said del Torre —— Then Ramon's voice hissed louder.

"My cousin Dolores de Luna that has been my mistress——"

That night a Jesuit priest leaving the King's House, where he had confessed Dolores, ran hastily to the Archbishop's. While he was there, another frightened messenger brought the news that Don Sebastian and his nephew had been fighting on Calvareo. But Jacinta, crying, brought the news to the Countess earlier, how Don Sebastian and Don Ramon at last had met, and how the nephew lay full of wounds upon the Calvary, literally cut in pieces, killed at his own uncle's hands.

VI

Dolores spent the night before the wedding kneeling in the little chapel of her dwelling. So we read that Eastern Catholics, before some trial, "lay all that night in the form of a cross." She was praying for her husband that had been to be—perhaps praying that he might be still, praying for light to see if there were sin in it. Perhaps she had

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remorses of her own. She had known the dead man he had killed as a boy, bold, reckless, wild; I suppose she had looked at him once or twice. A Southern maiden's glances return to torture her when they have led to blood; prudent maids of other climes are chary of them for tradition of some such reason.

Dolores never wept, but knelt there, dry-eyed, praying. In intervals she thought, "Would he be well enough to come?" as she knew that he was gravely wounded; but somehow she felt sure he would; and that if this marriage-bond were sin, he would venture it for her sake. A woman's conscience rules her heart, even in Spain; but a man, even Roman Catholic, will risk his own perdition to save her sorrow, or that no sin be hers. She must save him, she must be the judge. And sunrise found her pale but decided. Then she called Jacinta to her side, and asked her if she had carried to her husband (so she called him) her note.

Jacinta looked at her fiercely; but at the word "Husband," started. Then she said she had torn it up.

At the Countess's look she quailed, and lied again. She had it still, she said. Dolores

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bade her give it to him as he came from early mass.

Then Jacinta cried and told the truth. She admitted that she had given it to Don Ramon.

Dolores heard this with the blood about her heart, but sat there silent, while the Indian woman grovelled at her feet. It was her note, then, that caused the duel.

Then mine, too, is the sin, she thought, not his alone; and this thought gave her joy. But where was he? was he strong enough to come? She took her writing-case and wrote an exact copy of her other note; and this was what she had said, and Ramon had read, and then had fought his uncle:

"SEÑOR: The rose you asked of yesterday I gave Don Ramon; but the message that went with it was given him for you.

"MARIA JOSEPHA DOLORES, CONDESA DE LUNA."

As she finished writing, the General was announced. His face was bloodless, but his wounds had been carefully dressed, so that the bandages could not be seen. He knelt over her hand, though the kneeling set them bleeding once again. But Dolores, timid only

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in her love, still saw but remorse and duty in his eyes. With him he brought his own priest, a priest from the Liberal army. "Pobra," he said, "we must be married early —early and privately."

She sought his eyes timidly and tried to say it; to say what words her note said in her hand. But she could not. She could only say, "I know—I have heard," and she clenched the letter closer in her hand. She could not give it to him.

Del Torre's face could not turn whiter. But he said: "Forgive me—only your forgiveness I can ask. At noon, then?"

"At noon." She saw him leave the house; then, then she turned and cried to Jacinta: "Run, run, and give him this letter—at the Cathedral."

And again, upon her wedding-morning, Dolores went to pray. She was interrupted by a visit from the Archbishop. Some presentiment made her rise in apprehension; and as she stood erect, she saw, through the priest, the man. And she saw that he, too, had her secret; first the lover, then the priest, had found it out.

"This marriage must not be," said he.

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"Holy Father, I have confessed yesterday."

"This marriage must not be. You loved Don Ramon."

Dolores's lips curled. "I confessed yesterday. I see you have been told."

"Yesterday 'twas a duty—to-day it is a sin. Thou lovest Ramon."

Then Dolores rose to her full height and her blue eyes flamed like ice. "Sebastian, the Liberador, him I love in this life and the next; God knows it, and Ramon knows it, and now may you, and soon, please God, shall he!"

All forewarned that he was, the priest started at her vehemence. Fool that he had been!

"He has murdered his nephew—and thou art the cause."

The Countess was silent. All Catholic that she was, she had resolved to appeal from his judgment to God's.

"Thou wilt not obey?" said the priest.

Her lips half formed the word no.

"Then on thee and on him, on thy house I pronounce the curse of God. Thy family shall have cause to remember this day, this

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Holy Thursday, until it and both thy names shall have vanished from the earth."

Scarcely had the Archbishop left the house when del Torre came. She saw that he had not been to church. But she was married to him without another word. "If he has not my note," she thought, "he shall have it soon."

But before that night Jacinta, with the note in her hand, was buried with ten thousand others behind the closed cathedral doors.

VII

On this Thursday, March 26, 1812, while the services of the Hours of Agony were being celebrated in the great cathedral, in the presence of ten thousand people, the mountains trembled and the earth opened. The multitude pressed for the doors, but they opened inward, and the thronging masses pressed them fast. At the second shock the walls opened and the roof fell in. The Archbishop and many priests were buried at the altar. Thirty thousand people are said to have perished. Many were swallowed in the chasm that opened on the mountain-side, like rents

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in a bulging sail bursted in a gale. No stone houses in Carácas more than one story high was standing on that night—except the old Spanish castle where, in the tower-room, Dolores sat watching for her husband.

Through all that night del Torre worked amid the ruins. At dawn he was brought home insensible, fainting from his labors, bleeding at his opened wounds. Dolores met him at the door, and led the bearers to the room that should have been their bridal-room. There he was laid, and lay delirious many weeks with fever. Dolores never left his side.

The Archbishop was known to have been killed. Jacinta, the bride knew, must have perished too. The priest that had married them stayed with her; but Dolores, though brave enough to sin, was not false to her faith. The overwrought heart of the poor girl and great noblewoman connected all that had happened with what she deemed her sins—firstly, that she had caused her cousin's death, her husband's crime, but chiefly that she had braved the Church, and the curse its head, now dead, had launched upon her and upon Carácas. That their house alone was standing seemed only to mark them guilty.

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Dolores was a noble heart, and did not falter in her course. She had followed love, she had married him she loved; his wife she was, his wife she would remain. But she sought no soothing palliation from the friendly priest. She went to no confession; in all her life she never would confess herself; seek absolution again. Excommunicated she would live, that the curse might rest on her and not on him.

But ah, how ardently she watched for Sebastian's consciousness to come! for his eyes to rest on hers again! She felt sure the coldness in them now was gone. Delirious, he raved of her and of his love; he that never called her but by titles in his life, now cried Dolores, Dolores, and she held his hand and waited.

She bade the doctors tell her when his recovery was likely to come. And then, when one evening his hands moved, and he closed his eyes and slept, she sat there trembling, not daring to be beside him, but her face turned away. That yearning cry—Dolores, Dolores, had been stilled for hours; but the night passed and still he was asleep. Then, when it was broad sunlight, she heard a sud-

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den movement by the nurse, and the priest began to pray in Latin, and her heart stood still. He sat up; she retreated in the shadow, toward the door. His voice spoke; but oh! how low, how weak—not as it had been in his dreaming; alas! this was now his right mind. He saw not her; his eyes looked sanely out the window, through the crowded city. "It was a sin to marry her," he said.

She was carried fainting to her room within the tower, and there again she waited. "Has he asked for me?" she ventured to ask, at night.

He had asked for my lady, and they told him she was ill. And the next day again; and they had told him she was in her suite about the tower. She dared not seek him now. And flowers came to her from him, but no further speech. Thrice he sent his homage to her. He could not walk yet, but he sent his homage to her. She asked to know when he could walk; and they told her they would let her know. So, one afternoon, they told her he might walk the next day; and all that night she passed in prayer.

The next day she waited for his step upon

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the stone floor. It came not; to her tears and prayers, it came not. Jacinta's dead hand still held close the note. She prayed—was it wrong to pray when so unshrived?—to Maria Vergen de las Mercedes, but still it came not. Her haughty Spanish breeding forbade her showing sorrow to her servants, and they were cold and deferential to her. Jacinta? She was dead—Dolores knew, but thought that she had given him her letter. She had sinned, yes, but he was her husband.

The next day she asked the servant. The Señor General was gone. Gone? without seeing her even? He had had to go to the wars; he had not ventured to disturb my lady; he left a letter. A letter? she tore it open, read it. It sent his respectful worship to "the Marquesa;" it apologized for his illness; it prayed forgiveness from her for having married her; it was done to save her name. It said no word of love; and Sebastian Ruy del Torre was a gentleman: his love appeared not in his letter. If she loved him not, he would not wound her by showing his. It said no word of guilt. He would neither wound her by requiring love nor by suggesting blame; but to Dolores's morbid fancy it

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had a sense of blame. It closed by speaking of his duty at the wars; of his country's freedom; perhaps, a hint of hers. Dolores clasped the white paper to her breast, and, to immortal eyes its color was of blood. She read it once again; and del Torre, had he been there, could have seen her heart die in her eyes.

VIII

We must remember that Maria Josepha Dolores, Condesa del Torre y Luna, was a lonely young girl, educated but from books, devoutedly believing in a faith we like to think superstitious. Remember, please, also, that she loved, and braved her Church for love, and had not, so she thought, won his. She deemed her soul was damned; she knew her heart was broken. Not that there were no days when she did dare hope; no days in which she tried to frame a theory by which it still might seem he cared for her; but she believed he was borne down by their great guilt. And she resolved his soul, at least, would not be lost for hers. "My lady Marquesa would have her apartments in all the house," the letter said. "My lady had but

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to command. A small room in the tower was enough for him—he could but rarely be home from the wars. He trusted, if his presence was painful, she would not see him," etc., etc. And, after many months, when the General came back—his wife met him not. The rooms of state were carefully prepared for him, and all his suite; flowers, banquets were ready; all his retinue and hers, in their joint blazonry, were in attendance. Only, strangely enough, just that little tower-room was the one my lady Marchioness preferred. Would he kindly yield it to her?

Of course, and the General sent her a rope of pearls. They almost broke her resolution; but she met him not. The General only sighed; this was all as he had known. The evil nephew, done to death by his own hand, still had her heart. He sighed and his hair grew whiter. One rending memory came over him, of the last time he had seen her eyes.

He could not know, as he rode homeward up the street, after his first state visits, straining his eyes up to that tower-window frowning so blankly, how late her own had left it —those eyes of purple-gray that every beggar

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in Carácas soon knew well, save only he. Before the next return his glory blazed abroad, and Bolivar came back with him. Bolivar, the Liberator. All thoughtful preparation, all courtly care, all a Spanish grandee's splendor was spread forth to receive him in the Casa Rey; but the Châtelaine was never seen. It was not necessary to explain her absence; such things get quickly known; it was, of course, thought she had loved the cousin. And the strange Old World Gothic pride made her bearing, the honor of the house, del Torre's silence, only too easily intelligible to them. So the Marquis del Torre never saw his bride on his returning home.

But, had he known it, he never opened a door that she had not vanished through it. He never touched a flower she had not placed for him. He never looked in a mirror her gray eyes had not just left. He never touched a wine-glass to his lips that her lips had not kissed it. The very missal that he read from had been warmed within her bosom.

O ghosts and mediums, and vulgar spirits of air! and stupid tables, mirrors that are flattered with tales of second sight! Why did you not hold a look of hers one moment

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longer? why did not the roses keep a second longer her lips' breath for him? Poor fables of visions in the air, that could not draw the image of her eyes to his as he rode up the street scarce a hundred mortal bodies' breadths away! But they never did; he never saw her, she saw him only as he rode away upon his horse; and so for many—nay, not many (such poor slight power has heaven)—not for many, years. And as his horse bore him away, she came to the tower-window and watched him go—and there she sat weeks, months, until the pennons flashed or the trumpet's note announced to her, waiting, that he was come again. For he always came in such guise, announced with ceremony. And he did not dream her eyes had been at the tower-window ever since. For their eyes never met.

But the people knew, and so they called her "Our Lady of the Tower." And Nuestra Doña del Torre is she called there still. And thus they lived there alone within that great house, each for pity of the other in courage, each for awe of love in silence; each so loving, so brave, so silent, that the other never knew.

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IX

"NUESTRA DOÑA DEL TORRE"—by that title, I fancy, she is known in heaven. For in that city all the good that was worked was hers; after the earthquake, then through siege and civil war, her heart directed her handmaidens, ladies loving her did her soft work. Her own life was but a gentle message. For she never but for the convent left her tower-room. Thither, however, poor old men, children, troubled girls, would come to see her.

All this time Bolivar was battling with the might of Spain, and del Torre (del Torre y Luna now he always called himself, liking, at least, to link his name with hers; but she had dropped her own name and called herself del Torre alone—Maria Dolores del Torre) was Bolivar's captain. Years the war lasted. Once our General was captured in the city; he came to Carácas at a time of war, when it was legal for the Governor to capture him; he had heard some rumor that his wife was ill. He would have been shot but that he escaped from gaol, and this so easily that the prison doors seemed to turn of

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themselves. No youth, or woman, or child in all Carácas but would have turned a traitor for our lady.

Del Torre's face looked old—Dolores knew it not. She never saw him—except, perhaps, a distant figure on a horse. When he was out, she roamed the house; when he came back she shut herself within her apartments. He never returned, from the shortest absences, a walk or a mass, without making formal announcement. He wondered only at the flowers; the perfections of his banquets, the splendor of his household, were for his guest and as it should be. At first del Torre had hoped to see at least a handkerchief fly from her window, a greeting or a wave of the hand, on his return. But it was always black and blank when he saw it. At first, this cost him tears: a greeting seemed so little—only courtesy! But afterward he only sighed; no man should repine that events fulfil his expectations rather than his hopes.

Their money grew apace. With part of hers Dolores built a church at Los Teques, a property that had been her mother's not far from the city. Half her time she spent there; and it stands there still, and is called

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after the Vergen de las Mercedes—Our Lady of Pity—to whom alone Dolores dared to pray. But the Church took her treasure and it kept her secret. Sometimes, in God's providence, even pity is withheld.

One's heart beats quick to think what might have happened had she ventured to confession—the priest who married them still was with her, in the household, an honest priest, who loved del Torre, too. But Rome, which knows how to be gentle as a mother, can also be as cruel as the grave. So Dolores went on in building churches, and Don Sebastian offered his brave heart wherever he saw a bullet fly for liberty. The best work of the world is done by broken hearts.

One time that he came home, he found a medallion by his plate. It was set with pearls, in tricolor enamel. He opened it, and it was a miniature of her. Then once a rush of human blood bore all his barriers of honor, duty, resolves of conduct, far away. He hastened through the house to the tower, where she lived. He hastened—crying Dolores, Dolores, as he had cried in his delirium. Her maid opened—not Jacinta, but Jacinta's daughter, now a woman. My Lady

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Marquosa had gone to the convent at Los Teques for some weeks' prayer.

X

After this, del Torre's body grew broken, with his heart.

It was the last campaign of liberation. The final battle was fought not far from Los Teques, where the convent was; and the wall of the church of the Vergen de las Mercedes was scarred with balls. The fight was over, the country was free. And the General at last was killed.

Bolivar himself went with del Torre's body to Carácas; our General's *corps d'armée* were his pall-bearers. The news, of course, had been sent to the city; the Governor had fled; the General's tri-color now, the red-white-green of Colombia, was floating over the Capitol. All the town was gay with banners, merry with song. It had forgotten the earthquake, and was now rebuilt, though lower down. The Casa Rey now stood at the head of the principal street, which sloped from it down the mountain-side. And as the regiment escorting his body debouched into this

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avenue and turned upward (as its dead leader had so often done before), and the town came in view, there was a great hush upon the people. For lo! Now, at last, the window of the tower was wide open and the house bore all no black, but was festooned with laughing tricolor. And the window of the tower was open, and there within stood our Lady Dolores, in her white wedding laces, waving her hand.

She met them at the great door. Bolivar, and the officers who had been with our General, started. For, as she stood there in her slender satin gown, her eyes upon them, she was like a young girl. And her girlish waist was bound about with pearls.

The fact was, she was seven-and-twenty. They placed his bier first in the great room; but she would have it in hers, so in the tower-room they placed it, with burning candles standing sentry now where she had stood; and by its side were lilies—the flower of the Holy Ghost—and then they left her. Then first, since her wedding-day, she looked upon him, face to face, his eyes now dead to see. Their eyes so met. And outside, from the city now again joyous, came the carillon of freedom bells.

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DYNEVOR

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DYNEVOR

"OF course you remember him; Dynevor was well known, not only in London, but in Paris, Pau, New York. That winter, we were all at Biarritz.

"Lady Moreen was there—a young girl of two and twenty—for the winter season. It is so warm there still, in December, that you can walk by the sea.

"I think, not many people knew he loved her.

"We went out walking every day, a party of us; this day, it was warmer than usual, and we went so far as the White Cliff.

"Dynevor was not walking with Moreen. Every one called her Moreen—people knew not her other name—she was so lovely, with so sweet a smile! only her eyes were deep and sad, like the sea. He never walked with her. Indeed, I know that he had hardly seen her for years, until then at Biarritz. That was

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why, to the end, they were thought strangers. But if she were in town, he would be in town; though he never went to see her. He would not walk by her house, in the day; he would not go where he might meet her; yet he would stay at country-houses the week after her visit. Casual references, reminiscences, hover a few days about departed guests, and Dynevor would glean these.

"When he knew that some person had lately been seeing her he would seek that person out, in the hope he might be told something about her. Yet when her name came naturally in the conversation, he would never take it up. He never led people on to speak of her.

"He was devoted to her young relations, her cousins, who might talk of her, her friends. When she was down in Devon, he would be there: but would never cross the ten miles of country that lay between his place and hers.

"So on this day; he walked behind her, but not alone; he was a man of the world, and would avoid comment; he was with that handsome Lady Brayham, if I remember right. La Falaise — the White Cliff — is a

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precipice, almost perpendicular above the sea: below, it hollows under, so that you can hear the waves reverberate beneath it. I did not see Dynevor speak to Moreen all that day.

"God knows how it happened. She was with some duffer, I suppose. First I knew, she fell; not quite at the sheer, but rolling, falling from smooth ledge to ledge, beyond all hope of stopping, and then over the last one into the sea. We were all scattered about the face of the cliff, here and there, wherever its concave face gave resting-place.

"Without a cry she sank, in that last plunge, into a great silent surge; the cliff went down too straight, below, for much breaking of foam.

"Every man started down, as quickly as he could; dropping from ledge to ledge, hanging, sliding where he could not climb. There was too much slope for one straight plunge into the sea, we all thought.

"But from above us all Dynevor came. Running from the verge of the cliff, he shot far out like an arrow. He seemed to cleave the air in a straight line; and struck the sea, clear of the last ledge, slantingly.

"There was hardly a bubble where he

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sank; the clear water too deep and the cliff too smooth and straight for foam, as I said. I saw him dive through the bright green billow, by his track of bubbled air.

"Of course we all hung breathless on the verge. After a minute, he reappeared.

"'Have you seen her?'

"'No.'

"Again he dived.

"That time he rose, wrapped in a purple mantle: it was kelp. I can see now how the sun struck through it and the air-green wave. That mighty surge of Biscay was coming in, beating the cliff great blows, yet silent, sprayless. The surface of each wave was still as glass.

"Once more he vanished in the transparent depth. Other men would have gone after him, but they could not clear, as he had, the last forty feet of slanting rock, with the jagged reef that lined the ocean's edge. They all got ropes enough, and spars; and three men made a chain to let me down, so that I could see beneath the jutting rock. Yet no one spoke.

"Again Dynevor rose. It was many minutes, now. His face was pale.

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"He could hardly speak; but he looked at me. I shook my head.

"He sank again; but reappeared, in shorter time. His lips were white, and his mouth gasped the air.

"'Come back!' I cried (for I alone could see him); 'you cannot find her.'

"He turned to look up to me, and a great silent wave lifted him almost to my hand. His face was deathlike. And it was not his parted lips, but in his eyes I saw him smile.

"He turned his face toward me, kindly, with that old smile and light of laughter in his eyes. 'Come back,' I said.

"Something like youth was in his face. But he sank, diving, in one mighty plunge, well under the White Cliff itself, so that the jutting rock was interposed between us; and we could not see where he had gone. We waited very long, but no one spoke.

"That time I think he found her; for he did not come back."

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